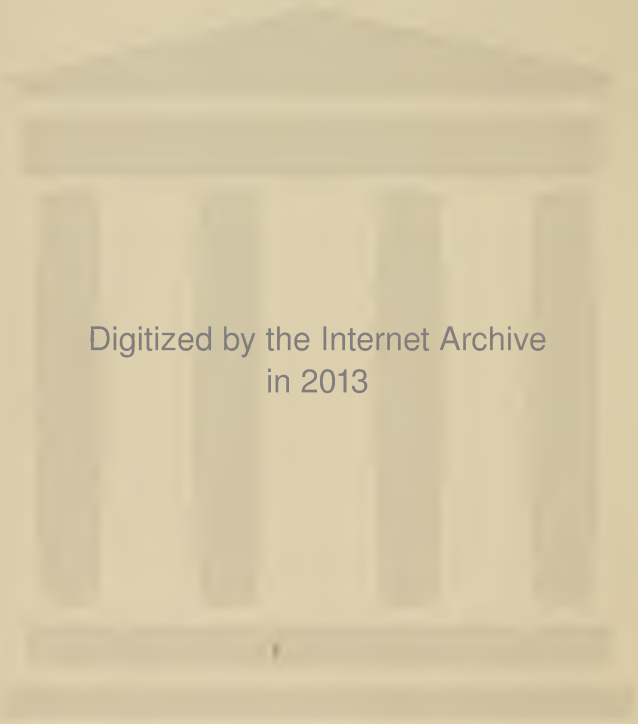
LETTERS OF JOHN RUSKIN TO CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

Ulrich Middeldorf



LETTERS OF JOHN RUSKIN

TO

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME II

Ever yours lovingly VR

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME II

PART III, *Continued.* 1868–1873

PART IV. 1873–1893

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

III — *Continued*

1868–1873

LETTERS OF JOHN RUSKIN

III — *Continued*

1868–1873

During the summer and autumn of 1870 my home was in one of the spacious old villas near Siena. The climate was delightful, the city one of the most interesting and picturesque of the many Italian cities to which these terms apply. In June Ruskin came, with a charming party, consisting of Miss Agnew, Mrs. H. and her daughter, to spend some days with us. He was in a delightful mood; the clouds which darkened his spirit had lifted for the moment, and all its sunshine and sweetness had free play. He spent much time in drawing the lioness and her cubs at the base of one of the pillars of the wonderful pulpit in the wonderful Cathedral. We wandered through the mediæval town, we drove and walked through many of the roads and

paths of the picturesque region, and Ruskin enjoyed to the full all the loveliness of the Tuscan landscape, the interest of its historic associations, and the charm of the Italian atmosphere. No guest could have added more to the pleasure of the household.

VENICE, Saturday, 17th *June* [1870].

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have just got your letter; yes, I will come to Siena. I have to go for a fortnight up into Switzerland with Joanna and our friends to see Alpine roses. Then I 'll run straight south to you. I cannot write more to-day, but will this evening.

It seems to me as if every saving power was at present being paralyzed, or stupefied, or killed. I know, too well, the truth of what Dickens told you of the coming evil.

Ever your affectionate

J. RUSKIN.

VENICE, 19th *June*.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I knew you would deeply feel the death of Dickens. It is very

frightful to me — among the blows struck by the fates at worthy men, while all mischievous ones have ceaseless strength. The literary loss is infinite — the political one I care less for than you do. Dickens was a pure modernist — a leader of the steam-whistle party *par excellence* — and he had no understanding of any power of antiquity except a sort of jackdaw sentiment for cathedral towers. He knew nothing of the nobler power of superstition — was essentially a stage manager, and used everything for effect on the pit. His Christmas meant mistletoe and pudding — neither resurrection from dead, nor rising of new stars, nor teaching of wise men, nor shepherds. His hero is essentially the iron-master; in spite of "Hard times," he has advanced by his influence every principle that makes them harder — the love of excitement, in all classes, and the fury of business competition, and the distrust both of nobility and clergy which, wide enough and fatal enough, and too justly founded, needed no apostle to

the mob, but a grave teacher of priests and nobles themselves, for whom Dickens had essentially no word. . . .

Please send me a line to post office Lugano, saying how long you stay, and I will do my best to come as soon as I can, if your "summer" means not quite into the hot months.

My faithful love to you all.

Ever your affectionate

J. RUSKIN.

Monday, 20th *June.*

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have changed my purpose, suddenly, and am going to make sure of seeing you at once — though I cannot at present stay — but for many reasons, chiefly the danger of losing hold of what I have just been learning here, it is better for me not to stay in Italy, but to go home quietly and write down what I have got — else I should learn too much, and get nothing said.

Yes, necessarily, there is a difference in manner between writing intended for a pro-

fessor's class and that meant to amuse a popular audience; also, I hope at fifty I *am* mentally stronger than at twenty-five. But the pain has not done anything for me. Indignation has sometimes — but always more harm than good, the now quite morbid dislike of talking being one result of it very inconvenient at Oxford.

I shall have to trespass on you (ultimately I do not doubt you will be glad I have) by bringing not only J. and C., but C.'s good and sweet (and infinitely sensitive in all right ways) mother, for whom, mainly, I made all the plans of this journey; a most refined English gentlewoman, who had never seen Italy.

But, alas, I can't stay more than three days at the utmost. I must be three days in Florence for my own work. I shall take those at once, at the Grande Bretagne, before coming to you. Ever your loving

JOHN RUSKIN.

I am very glad the Medusa is not Leonardo's, but I speak of his temper from gen-

eral examination of his drawings. I never remember seeing his signature, except as "Lionardo." Why do you like "e" better?

29 June, 1870.

My dearest Charles, — It's no use trying to write thanks, or good-byes, but here's what I wrote yesterday for heads of talk about Lippi — for J.'s satisfaction if any may be, out of me, just now: —

1. Laying on of gold as paint, for light, all exquisite — none lost.

2. Chiaroscuro perfect, when permitted.

3. Faces all in equal daylight — conventional.

4. No unquiet splendor in accessaries.

5. Essential colour as fine as Correggio.

6. Expressional character the best in the world — individual character feeble, but lovely.

7. Essential painting as good as Titian in his early time.

8. Form, in invention, perfect; in knowledge and anatomy, false.

9. Colour in invention very feeble; in sentiment exquisite.

There — and I 've seen the Strozzi Titian — and it 's Beyond everything, and I 'm

Ever yours, J. R.

BELLINZONA, Thursday, 8th *July*.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I find here your long and interesting letter of June 20th. . . .

I quite feel all that you say of Dickens, and of his genius, or benevolence, no one, I believe, ever has spoken, or will speak, more strongly than I. You will acquit me, I know, of jealousy; you will not agree with me in my acknowledgment of his entire superiority to me in every mental quality but one — the desire of truth without exaggeration. It is my stern desire to get at the pure fact and nothing less or more, which gives me whatever power I have; it is Dickens's delight in grotesque and rich exaggeration which has

made him, I think, nearly useless in the present day. I do not believe he has made *any* one more good natured. I think all his finest touches of sympathy are absolutely undiscovered by the British public; but his mere caricature, his liberalism, and his calling the Crystal palace "Fairyland" have had fatal effect — and profound. . . .

I believe Dickens to be as little understood as Cervantes, and almost as mischievous.

We had a lovely day at Padua, and I see Mantegna with ever increasing admiration. (By the way, on the 4th we all drank to the prosperity of America — I recommending Mrs. H. to put her good wishes for it into the form of the prayer in the Litany for "fatherless children and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed.") Then some Luini study at Milan, Como, and Lugano, and such a drive from Lugano here as I think never was driven by mortal before, for beauty.

I fear I must close this before I get yours

— if there is one, but will write again from the Giesbach. Love to you all from all of us.

Ever your loving

J. RUSKIN.

GIESBACH, 12th *July*, 1870.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — We have been travelling so fast that I have had no time to look at anything in my folios. I have now been examining your present of the "Mantegnas" very carefully, and must again thank you for it most earnestly. I have never seen more wonderful or instructive work — the richness of its life and strength, and utter masterfulness of hand, surpass all I know of this kind. What a strange hardness and gloom pervades it all, nevertheless, and what a strange element of Italian character this is, in Sandro Botticelli, and even in the Pisani, partly, also.

I feel that I have left Italy too soon for my purposes, and I must come back in the autumn for a few weeks. I shall most likely

run down to you, if you are still at Siena, and finish my lioness and cubs, who are not at all what I want, yet, and show Eliot one or two things I promised and did not. . . .

Ever your affectionate

J. Ruskin.

Denmark Hill, 29th *July*, 1870.

My dearest Charles,—. . . The war is very awful to me: being as I think all men's fault as much as the emperor's; certainly as much Prussia's and England's.

Paris looks infinitely sad, but I took Mrs. H., J., C., and C.'s two brothers to the theatre (Comédie Française), and we heard the Marseillaise sung about as well as it could be. The cry of the audience, "à genoux," at the last verse, was very touching.

C. was singing the Marseillaise all the way to Boulogne at the top of her pretty voice, to my no small discomfiture, who was reading Sainte-Beuve's "Étude sur Virgile," which is very nice as far as it reaches, curi-

ously shortened in its reach by the writer's never for a moment admitting to himself the possibility of a True, as well as an Ideal, spirit, or God.

I have been endeavoring this morning to define the limits of insanity. My experience is not yet wide enough: I have been entirely insane, as far as I know, only about Turner and Rose, and I 'm tired; and have made out nothing satisfactory.

All the grass burnt up everywhere — drought like Elijah's, and priests of Baal everywhere with nobody to kill them. My mother is wonderfully well, but home is very sad, and I have n't got my pups at Siena half as well as I thought I had.

Please write a line to me often. I am anxious about you. Ever your loving

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, 7th *August*, 1870.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Your letter and the photographs, which are delightful, arrived

last night; it is better to send some little word of answer at once . . . to your two questions about Turner. His "I have been cruelly treated" was reported to me by his friend Mr. Griffith (who was much with him before his death) as having been said one day almost without consciousness of speaking aloud, as he was looking sorrowfully at the pictures then exhibiting at Pallmall, from his gallery, everybody admiring them too late. The other saying came from an unquestionable quarter. Mr. Kingsley's cousin was in Turner's own gallery with him. They came to the "Crossing the Brook;" a piece of paint out of the sky, as large as a fourpenny piece, was lying on the floor. Kingsley picked it up, and said, "Have you noticed this?" "No," said Turner. "How can you look at the picture and see it so injured?" said Kingsley. "What does it matter?" answered Turner, "the only use of the thing is to recall the impression." Of course it was false, but he was then thinking of himself only, having

long given up the thought of being cared for by the public.

It was very curious your reading Ste.-Beuve's "Virgil" with me. You will have seen by the lectures already that I feel as strongly as he, and much more strongly. (I like Ste.-Beuve much, and see why you spoke of his style as admirable; but he is altogether shallow and therefore may easily keep his agitation at ripple-level. Please compare his translation of Homer's Eolus at p. 204 with mine in "Queen of Air," p. 22, and see how he has missed the mythic sense of the feasting, and put in "viandes savoreuses" out of his head, not understanding why Homer made the house misty). But for "Virgil," all you say of him is true — but through and under all that there is a depth and perfectness that no man has reached but he; just as that Siena arabesque, though in a bad style, is insuperable, so Virgil, in (not a bad, but) a courtly and derivative style, has sterling qualities the most rare.

Thank you for writing what you had told me, but what I am only too glad to have written, of Cervantes. I will look at the two parts carefully.

Yes, I 'll write often now, little words to tell you what I am feeling, and trying to do. Loving memory to you all.

Ever your grateful

J. RUSKIN.

9th *August*, '70.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I did not, in my last letter, enter at all on my real meaning in saying " Don Quixote " was mischievous, and I want you to know it.[1]

I never discerned the difference you point out between the parts. But *I* read the whole as the first, not as the last. It always affected me *throughout* with tears, not laughter. It was always *throughout*, *real* chivalry to me; and it is precisely because the most touching valour and tenderness are rendered vain by madness, and because, thus vain,

[1] See letter of July 8th.

they are made a subject of laughter to vulgar and shallow persons, and because *all* true chivalry is thus by implication accused of madness, and involved in shame, that I call the book so deadly.

Ever your loving

J. R.

Sunday Morning, 14th *August*, '70.

My dearest Charles, — . . . I got yesterday in London a — guess what? "Roman de la Rose," of about 1380, with beautiful little dark *gray* vignettes. Very typical of the course of all *my Roman*, and therefore exquisitely sweet in feeling — not particularly wise in execution. But they are *so* pretty, the Dieu d'Amour, with a little stiff crown and his hair coming out in crockets like Richard the II. It is perfect from end to end, and in the French form Chaucer must have read it in (I had to give £200 for it! and feel very much ashamed of myself).

Look here — will you please, when next you

go into Siena, look at the bosses of the dragon panel of pulpit at the corners and tell me if this one[1] is indeed flatter than the other three, or has had its central boss broken away? Ever your loving

J. R.

Morning, 17th *August.*

My dearest Charles, — I was looking for accounts of thunder this morning, and took your despised Virgil. N.B. — Behind me in my own special bookcase I have only two books, — Burmann's Virgil and the large "della Crusca Dante," with Longfellow's translation beside it (Europe and America). Well, Burmann's Virgil (get this edition, Amsterdam, 1746; it is every way so useful with its serious notes and full index) has, on two of its pages, the 441st to the 456th line of Æn. 8th — ending with the 456th.[2]

[1] Here a hasty sketch.

[2] The verses referred to are as follows: —

Arma acri facienda viro: nunc viribus usus,
Nunc manibus rapidis, omni nunc arte magistra.
Praecipitate moras. Nec plura effatus: at illi

Please read those very slowly — stopping first at the 453rd, and going over the 441st to that, again and again, till you have got them *thoroughly* into your ears and mind.

Ocius incubuere omnes, pariterque laborem
Sortiti. Fluit aes vivis, aurique metallum,
Volnificusque chalybs vasta fornace liquescit.
Ingentem clypeum informant, unum omnia contra
Tela Latinorum; septenosque orbibus orbes
Inpediunt. Alii ventosis follibus auras
Accipiunt redduntque; alii stridentia tingunt
Aera lacu. Gemit impositis incudibus antrum.
Illi inter sese multa vi brachia tollunt
In numerum, versantque tenaci forcipe massam.
Haec pater Aeoliis properat dum Lemnius oris,
Evandrum ex humili tecto lux suscitat alma,
Et matutini volucrum sub culmine cantus.

If there were other reason for the selection of these special verses for study, than the vivid picture they present, and the charm of the contrast between the toil and noise with which the cave resounds, and the smoky glare which fills it, with the quiet of Evander's hut, and the clear light of dawn, and the morning song of the birds, I must leave the reader to discover it. — I cannot recall what led Ruskin to speak of "your *despised* Virgil." The epithet does not match with the admiration which the perfection of Virgil's art inspires, or with the personal sympathy which the peculiar depth and delicacy and tenderness of his sentiment often evokes. Perhaps I had spoken of the lack in him of the high powers of the imagination which the two or three poets possessed who, each in his own heaven of invention,

sopra gli altri com' aquila vola.

Then go on and read the last three, 454 to 456, very slowly also.

Ever your loving,

J. R.

My dearest Charles, — I have your beautiful letter to-day, about Don Quixote, etc. I 'm just beginning to-day, seriously, my autumn course of lectures, which are to be on Greek coins, with the Tortoise of Egina, and I 'm in my writing element again, and almost happy, chiefly because I heard the day before yesterday that somebody else was very *un*happy. (Did you ever think there was such monstrousness in me?)

That is indeed an important mistake about the bag.[1] Of course these stories are all first fixed in my mind by my boy's reading of Pope — then I read in the Greek rapidly to

[1] In the *Queen of the Air* (i. 19) Ruskin, writing of the myth of Æolus, said, "Æolus gives them [the winds] to Ulysses, all but one, bound in a leathern bag." But it was only "the blustering winds," βυκτάων ἀνέμων κέλευθα (Od. x. 20) that Æolus had tied up.

hunt out the points I want to work on, and am always liable to miss an immaterial point. But it is strange that I hardly ever get anything stated without some grave mistake, however true in my main discoveries.

That use of κνισσῆεν [1] is precisely the most delicious thing in the myth — it is that which makes it an enigma. Had Homer used any other word than that he would have shown his cards in a moment — which he never does, nor any other of the big fellows. Yet it ought at once to lead you to the mythic meaning when you remember that meat smoke is precisely what winds would carry away — that the house being full of the smell of dinner is precisely the *Unwindiest* character you could have given it. Well, that ought to set you considering: and then you will see that while the *Calm* cloud is high in heaven, the Wind cloud rises up from the earth, and is actually the Steam of it, under

[1] In the description of the house of Æolus, at the beginning of the tenth book of the Odyssey.

the beneficent Cookery of the winds, which make it good for food. "Thy Dwelling shall be of the Dew of Heaven, and of the *fatness* of the Earth."

My long training in Hebrew myths had at least the advantage of giving this habit of always looking for the under-thought, and then my work on physical phenomena just gave me what other commentators, scholars only, can never have, the sight of what Homer saw.

I bought a picture by Holman Hunt this year, of a Greek sunset, with all the Homeric colours in the sky — and the κνισσῆεν cloud just steaming up from the hills, so *exactly* true that everybody disbelieves its being true at all. Then I found out the Piping and Fluting from the Pindaric ode which describes Athena making the Pan's pipe out of Medusa's hair. You 'll be aghast at the lot of things I 've got together about Egina, but they are so pretty, the whole story of the Æacidæ and Myrmidons and ever so much political economy — with the Phœnician

Aphrodite to soften it all into correggiosity of Correggio.

Ever your ridiculous and loving,

J. R.

ὀνείατα is a perfectly heavenly word — it means the benefit of *well digested* anything; all my books are ὀνείατα — it means a dinner ate imaginatively — νῖον ἐν ἀσφόδελω — the Barmecides' dinner sometimes.

Look at Liddell's last reference to the Homeric Hymns:

Δημήτηρ
ἡδὺ καταπνείουσα, καὶ ἐν κόλποισιν ἔχουσα . . .
ἀθανάτοις, θνητοῖς τ' ὄνειαρ καὶ χάρμα τέτυκται.

DENMARK HILL, 26th *August*, '70.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Your little Siena picture and my bas-relief, which I 'm delighted with, came a week ago.

Your absurdest of all conceivable, and very charming letter came the night before last. I was too much astonished to answer. And the photograph of my Florence door came last

night, and so I must answer, to say it 's the very thing I want, and I 'm ever so grateful.

You 'll never make me miserable any more by thinking you may be right and Carlyle wrong, after all, when I see how you misread this French war; this war is, on the one side, the French, the purest and intensest republicanism (choosing a fool for a leader, and able to kick him off when it likes) joined to vanity, lust, and lying — against, on the German side, a Personal, Hereditary, Feudal government as stern as Barbarossa's, with a certain human measure of modesty, decency, and veracity, in its people.

And dear old Carlyle — how thankful I am that he did his Friedrich exactly at the right time! It 's the likest thing to a Providence I 've known this many a year, except my getting the "Roman de la Rose."

You 're more absurd about that than even about the French — but it 's of no use talking.

Were n't you pleased when the photograph of the Pisano Lions came, to see how piti-

ful it was, compared even to that rude sketch of mine? — and that we poor draughtsmen are still worth our salt?

I 'm in hopes of bringing out enough from the Greek coins to make you not sorry I stay at home. I wish I were with you, but that 's all "*Roman*" — put it out of your head.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. R.

9th September, 1870.

My dearest Charles, — I don't know if any letters are likely to reach you just now. Have you got mine on Æolus and fat smoke? I have two kind ones from you. . . .

A letter you sent to me in March on Michael Angelo is of great value. (It quotes Lucretius *tantum religio*, but you are not to pity me out of Lucretius, whom I much dislike). I am greatly sorry not to be with you. But you may be pleased for one reason. Had I come back to Italy, I might never have taken up my broken Greek work again,

whereas this has thrown me back on it, making not only my past labour of service, but laying a more formal foundation for all. But I 'm very weary and sad. Joan is gone away — and the evenings' sitting beside my mother only makes me sadder still. . . . Love to you all.

Ever your affectionate

J. RUSKIN.

COWLEY RECTORY, UXBRIDGE, 30*th Sept.* 1870.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — . . . Thanks for reference to Boutmy.[1] I was glad you named it, for I had picked it up at a railway stall, and read it with attention, and was wondering, till I got your letter, whether it represented average French criticism, or was really what it appeared to me — a work of separate merit. It is very good, and suggestive from its French point of view, but very narrow and shallow. It is most interesting in the utter incapability of the Frenchman to penetrate the solemnity

[1] *Philosophie de l'Architecture en Grèce*, par Émile Boutmy. Paris, 1870.

of Greek thought. The quantity of pain that I have myself actually suffered has been greatly useful to me in this respect, and it has not been less useful because in many ways my own fault or folly. I know in every shadow the meaning of the word Μοῖρα.

Its analysis of the Parthenon is exactly the kind of thing I used to do, of separate buildings that I had closely studied — ignorant of others. I could write a similar essay on any good building whatsoever, and show it to be alone in the world — from the great Pyramid to Chartres; and the reason that my Greek work is so imperfect now is precisely because I did *not* begin with it, but have reached it and worked it into a complete, or nearly so, panorama of methods of art. I think when you see what I am doing, even now, for Oxford this year, you will admit it to be of more value than any existing statement of Greek style; and that while other people could, and will, do as good or better work than I in mediæval study, no one but I

could have put true life into those dead Greek forms.

You yourself know more than I (in many points) of mediæval art — and incomparably more than I of mediæval literature, but as soon as you have a little more confidence in me, you will find me opening out much both new and firm ground to you in the classics. In *both* fields I am but a gleaner and guesser — but I can *understand* Diomed's mind, or Diogenes's, infinitely better than I can a Venetian soldier's or a Florentine monk's.

Love to you all.

Ever your affectionate

JOHN RUSKIN.

10th *November*, 1870.

My DEAREST CHARLES,— . . . I am busy on my work. I wish that wanted less mending, after first draught of it — the patching is most of the business.

The third lecture, on colored sculpture, will be amusing, I think. I enlarge first one

of the fish from those little ivory Japan circlets you bought for me at Paris, then, saying simply that for execution it is an ideal of true Greek ideal of sculpture, I give beside the fish profile the profile of the self-made man from Punch, — enlarged also to bas-relief size, and then a Greek Apollo beside both, to show them how all real design depends on *νοῦς τῶν τιμιωτάτων.* A great deal comes out nicely, as I work on. . . .

C—— and her mamma came last week to help Joan to give a party — Dance! I went, with C—— to the dressmaker's a month ago and got her first low dress, and she wore it for the first time at Joan's party, and looked lovely. Meantime, I had gone to a dinner of the Metaphysical Society, where Huxley was to read a paper on a Frog's soul — or appearances of soul. The Deans of Westminster and Canterbury, Bishop of Worcester, Master of Lincoln, Duke of Argyll, Archbishop Manning, Father Dal— something, who said the shrewdest things of any, and

Chancellor of Exchequer (who only made jokes) might have made a nice talk of it, but the Duke of Argyll got into logical antagonisms with Huxley, and then nothing came of it. I wanted to change the frog for a toad — and to tell the company something about eyes — but Huxley would n't let himself be taken beyond legs, for that time. I came back impressed more than ever with the frivolous pugnacity of the world, — the campaign in France not more tragic in reality of significance, than the vain dispute over that table. . . .

Ever your loving

J. Ruskin.

Shortest Day, 1870.

My dearest Charles, —. . . I am giddy, a little, with overwork, or I would tell you something of lectures. They did not come out half what I wanted; the days seemed to melt into nothing at last.

England *has* been bad for me, this time,

but I won't live in a mere cobweb of fate any more.

I 'll send you some pamphlets, or the like, soon.

Ever your loving

J. R.

OXFORD, 23rd *February*, '71.

. . . I am setting to my work here, recklessly, to do my best with it, feeling quite that it is talking at hazard, for what chance good may come. But I attend regularly in the schools as mere drawing-master, and the men begin to come one by one — about fifteen or twenty already, — several worth having as pupils in any way, being of temper to make good growth of.

I am living in a country inn, or, rather, country-town inn, the Crown and Thistle of Abingdon, and drive in, six miles, to Oxford every day but Sunday — two days every week being statedly in the schools — and contingently there or in the Bodleian on others.

This seems to put an end, abruptly, to all Denmark Hill life.

[DENMARK HILL] 3rd *April*, '71.

. . . I have had much disturbed work at Oxford, and coming home a few days ago for rest, my poor old Annie dies suddenly, and I 've just buried her to-day, within (sight of!) her old master's grave. It is very wonderful to me that those two, who loved me so much, should not be able to see me any more.[1]

[1] Anne, or Annie, as she was indifferently called, was an important and characteristic member of the Denmark Hill household, one of the wheels on which it ran its steady course. In 1873 Ruskin wrote of her in *Fors Clavigera*, Letter xxviii, words which he repeated twelve years later in the first number of *Præterita*, and which, because of my pleasant memories of her keen inspection and kind old-fashioned attentions to me as her master's friend, when I was at Denmark Hill, I am glad to reprint here. "Among the people whom one must miss out of one's life, dead, or worse than dead, by the time one is past fifty, I can only say for my own part, that the one I practically and truly miss most, next to my father and mother, . . . is this Anne, my father's nurse and mine. . . . From her girlhood to old age, the entire ability of her life was given to serving us. She had a natural gift and speciality for doing disagreeable things," not so much things disagreeable *to* others as those which others found disagreeable to do for themselves. "She was altogether occupied from the age of fifteen to seventy-two, in doing other people's

At Oxford, having been Professor a year and a half, I thought it time to declare open hostilities with Kensington, and requested the Delegates to give me a room for a separate school on another system. They went with me altogether, and I am going to furnish my new room with coins, books, catalogued drawings and engravings, and your Greek vases;[1] the mere fitting will cost me three or four hundred pounds. Then I 'm going to found a Teachership under the Professorship — on condition of the teaching being on such and such principles, and this whole spring I must work hard to bring all my force well to bear, and show what I can do.

It is very sad that I cannot come to Venice, but everything is infinitely sad to me — this black east wind for three months most of all. Of all the things that oppress me, this sense of the evil working of nature herself — my

wills instead of her own, and seeking other people's good instead of her own." Anne was no saint, but few saints have deserved as she did such a tribute.

[1] Vases which I had obtained in Italy for him.

disgust at her barbarity — clumsiness — darkness — bitter mockery of herself — is the most desolating. I am very sorry for my old nurse, but her death is ten times more horrible to me because the sky and blossoms are Dead also.

18th *May*.

My dearest Charles,— The Fortune has come. She is enough to change mine, for life — the Greek darling — and a globe made of Hexagons. And the vases, the thirty, not one broken and every one lovelier than the last. What *can* I send you for such a gift [1] (and the very thing I wanted in the nick of time)?

It 's late afternoon, and I have to go out and can only send this. I 'm better, but I 've so much on my mind just now — among other things I 'm going to give £5000 of stock to found a sub-mastership of drawing at Oxford, and to-day I 've been painting the white Florentine lily for him to teach with.

[1] Not a gift in the usual sense.

I 'll send you something of catalogues that will please you soon.

Ever your grateful

J. RUSKIN.

BROADLANDS, 28th *May*, '71.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have your little note about Titians, Tintorets, etc. I am so glad you have been fortunate enough to get those Tintorets — they are worth anything. I fear *I* cannot afford to buy anything more, so set am I now on my political work, as far as money is concerned, for my main actual work is all in art now, but I can't do the tenth part of what I plan; above all I *can't* get things printed; I 've nine lectures full of good work, all but ready, and can't get them into final form.

But I hope you 'll see news of me in the papers, in mid June, at Oxford. You have my joyful note over the Greek girl and the vases, I hope — they are quite priceless to me. Domestic matters very bad with me. My

mother steadily declining — I obliged to leave her in patient solitude sinking towards less and less possibility of pleasure or exertion. I am here with the φίλη[1] to whom the book is dedicated, which I hope you will receive either with this or by next post. . . .

Business matters heavy on me, too. I want to found an under-mastership at Oxford before June, and I can't sell the houses I want to found it with. And altogether! Forgive me when I don't write. My hand is so weary and heart so sick — but ever

Lovingly yours,

J. RUSKIN.

DENMARK HILL, 10th *August*, 1871.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — . . . I have to thank you for your letter on Michael Angelo, but I think I must have missed one since, for I am nearly certain you must have written after reading my Lecture to say that you were pleased at our feeling so exactly alike.

[1] Lady Mount-Temple. The book was *Sesame and Lilies*.

I am much better,[1] but my mother is so very feeble that I cannot in the least say whether there is any chance of my getting away from home. I have also things on hand which I think it will do me less harm to go on with quietly, than to bear the chagrin of neglecting — but you may trust me to go on quietly now, and I will soon write again.

Ever your loving

J. Ruskin.

Coniston, Lancashire, 14th *September*, 1871.

. . . In haste — more to-morrow. I 've bought a small place here, with five acres of rock and moor, a streamlet, and I think on the whole the finest view I know in Cumberland or Lancashire, with the sunset visible over the same.

The house — small, old, damp, and smoky chimneyed — somebody must help me get to rights.

[1] He had been dangerously ill at Matlock.

CONISTON, LANCASHIRE, 15th *September*, '71.

. . . My address as above for three weeks. I could not come to Dresden any more than Venice, being too ill to look at pictures or do more than I had engaged to do of thought. Here I have rocks, streams, fresh air, and, for the first time in my life, the rest of the purposed *home*. I may by some new course of things be induced to leave it, but have no intention of seeking ever again for a home, if I do. I have been directing the opening of paths to-day through copse, from a little nested garden sloping west to the lake and the sunset. I 'll send you some little sketches of it soon.

MELROSE, 24th *September*, '71.

. . . I shall in all probability be fairly settled in the house in November, for one of the reasons of my getting it is that I may fully command the winter sunsets, in clear sky — instead of losing the dead of day in the three-o'clock fog of London. Meantime, I am very

thankful for that sense of rest, which you feel also; but it is greatly troubled and darkened and lowered by the horrible arrangement of there being women in the world as well as mountains and stars and lambs, and what else one might have been at peace with — but for those other creatures!

What a lovely Tintoret that one at Dresden must be! I never saw it; and what a gigantic, healthy, Sea-Heaven of a life he had, compared to this sickly, muddy, half *eau sucrée* and half poisoned wine — which is my River of Life; and yet how vain his also! except to you and me. I am writing a word or two on his work — as true "wealth" opposed to French lithographs and the like, in the preface to second volume of my revised works, "Munera Pulveris." (The Oxford lectures on sculpture will soon follow, for the third.) I send you two of their illustrations, — not photo, but permanent engravings, — and "Fors Clavigera" is, I think, going on well. It takes more time than I like, but is begin-

ning to make an impression. Folio plates are in preparation, several successfully accomplished, for a series of examples to be issued to the public from the Oxford schools, with a short text to each number to replace my "Elements of Drawing." They begin with Heraldry (what will your backwoodsmen say to that?), then take up natural history in relation to it.

[DENMARK HILL] 1st *November*, 1871.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have to-day your most kind letter. When I came back from Lancashire I found my mother ill. I had to leave her to go to Oxford — returning, found her nigh, as I thought, to death. She has rallied, and may yet be spared some weeks to me, but that is all the respite I can hope, though a longer one, the physicians say, is possible.

I am still heavily overworked, but you will soon see, now, not uselessly. By Christmas I hope to send you three books at once, all carefully revised or written this year.

There is no fear of my sucking the orange at Coniston. There is none to suck. I have simply light and air, instead of darkness and smoke, — and ground in which flowers will grow. All I look for is light and peace — those, unless by some strange chance of evil, are sure to me. What little pleasure I still look for will be in Italy, mixed with bitter pain — but still intense in its way. In Cumberland[1] I merely breathe and rest.

[DENMARK HILL] 3 *November*, 1871.

I am working very prosperously. About Xmas, there (D. V.) will be a complete volume of "Fors," a volume of lectures on sculpture, a volume of revised Political Economy, and a begun "Natural History and Mythology of Birds" and the same of Fishes. My poor Mother will only look from afar (*if* so) — and I suppose not care to read — out of Heaven.

[1] Coniston is actually in Lancashire.

[*Dictated*]

DENMARK HILL, 6th *November*, 1871.

MY DEAREST CHARLES,— I have really to-day posted — Joan will bear witness to that — an order to send you the numbers of "Fors" you want. I have only been remiss in sending you anything because you cannot have any notion of what I am trying to do till the end of the year, when you will get, D. V., three books at once. However, I shall send you the last revises of the Lectures as they are printed, so that any helpful comment or caution may reach me, so as to leave me yet a moment for repentance. . . .

I don't wonder that you find Dresden a little dull. Since they got coal there it has been all spoiled; nevertheless, even in winter-time there must surely be loveliness in the granite valleys to the South, and all the hills on the other side of the bridges used to be beautiful, not to speak of Königstein and its district within so easy reach; and then, you've got Titian's pink lady in the Gallery, and Vero-

nese's Magi — I won't reckon George the Fourth's plate, which I was once taken to see, nor the little monsters with pearl stomachs in the Green chamber. But there must be music also— and surely some blue eyes worth looking at. . . .

Tell me what you are working at, and give me more specific accounts of your health.

Ever your lovingest

JOHN RUSKIN.

15 *November*, 1871.

. . .To-day I believe the first five sheets of the lectures are sent you — still in a very rough state apparently, for I catch two errors in the same leaf. Please read "fair" instead of "air" in fourth line page 75, and put a full stop after "Duces" and none after "proles" in page 76. The meaning of the title [1] is that I have traced all the elementary laws of sculpture, as you will see in following sheets, to a right understanding of the power of incision

[1] *Aratra Pentelici.*

or furrow in marble. The Greek girl you gave me — she is standing on tiptoe just now, very much pleased at what I am saying, in the corner of my study, and looks as if she never had heard anything that made her quite understand herself before — is made, if you recollect, a girl instead of a block of marble, by little more than a few fine furrows traced to and fro.

DENMARK HILL, 9th *December*, '71.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — It is Saturday — and on Tuesday last my mother died, and yet I have not written to tell you, feeling continually the same dread that I should have of telling you anything sad concerning yourself.

I am more surprised by the sense of loneliness than I expected to be, — but it can only be a sense, never a reality, of solitude, as long as I have such friends as you.

I have been very curious to ask you — since you will not admit Frederick to have been a hero, what your idea of heroism is?

I believe I shall have to give a subject for an essay at St. Andrews this year — the oldest University of Scotland. I am going to give "The definition of Heroism, and its function in Scotland at this day."

Ever your loving

J. RUSKIN.

P. S. [by Mrs. Severn]. He has n't told you that he has been made Lord Rector of St. Andrews.

23d *December*, 1871.

This will, I hope, reach you not long after Xmas day. My wishes are of no use, but are always very earnestly for you, and with you and yours.

Last night I saw a proof of the last of the 21 plates for sculpture-lectures, quite right. Nothing now but binding wanted for those and "Munera." To-day I have my series of casts and shields from Tomb of Queen Eleanor and Aymer de Valence, to begin my drawing class in Heraldry, and of little

statues from same tombs, to begin them in Propriety.

I have the first lecture written, and the rest planned, of series on connection of Science and Art, for next spring (ten), beginning 8th February, I hope.

In a book on Heraldry I find the 8th February, in Gothic times, began spring.

I have my Xmas and January "Fors" printed. February nearly all written.

I have a lecture on "The Bird of Calm," nearly ready for Woolwich in a fortnight. It is to be given to the cannon-making workmen.

I have got a "Danthe" of 1490 printed at Venice, out of Kirkup sale, with woodcuts to every canto.

I have got a wonderful new piece of opal, and some mineralogy in hand.

And I 'm very well, for me, but the day 's foggy, and I 've forgotten the chief thing I meant to put down — I 'm keeping my accounts since the shortest day beautifully.

That 's all I can say to-day, except love.

Oh — I forgot again the other chief thing I 've to say — I 've been going into the Americans as hard as I can go in "Fors," lately; but I don't mean *you*, you know, and I 'll come round presently to the other side.

Ever your loving

J. R.

[Denmark Hill] 4th *January*, 1872.

I have been so singularly, even for me, depressed and weak since the beginning of the year, that I could not write to you. One of the distinctest sources of this depression is my certitude that I ought now to wear spectacles; but much also depends on the sense of loss of that infinitude of love my mother had for me, and the bitter pity for its extinction. . . .

I much delight in this coin of Frederick, and very solemnly and with my whole heart prefer it to the Hercules. I should even prefer my own profile to the Greek Hercules, though mine has the wofulest marks of folly,

irresolution, and disease. But Frederick and I had both of us about the worst education that men could get for money, and both had passed through rough times which partly conquered us — being neither of us, certainly not I, made of the best metal, even had we been well brought up. One of the quaintest things in your last letter was your fixing, in your search for bad epithets for Frederick, on "Unsociable." And yet you love *me!*

But not to continue so insolent a comparison any longer, take the one instance of Frederick's domestic and moral temper, that having been in danger of death under the will — almost sentence — of a father partly insane, he yet never accuses, but in all things justifies, and evidently reverences that father through life. . . .

[January] 28th [1872].

. . . I have the registered letter, and will pack the "Slaver" forthwith.

It is right that it should be in America,[1] and I am well pleased in every way, and always

Your lovingest,

J. RUSKIN.

D. HILL, 13th *February*, '72.

. . . I am, as usual, unusually busy — when I get fairly into my lecture work at Oxford, I always find that the lecture would come better some other way, just before it is given, and so work from hand to mouth. There are to be ten this spring. Two are given, and I have two a week for four weeks, on the relation of art to natural science, and am printing them as I go on — besides all the work of changing into my rooms at Corpus, and sending the rest that 's in the house to Brantwood, and business connected with all, etc., etc., etc., — and I want to draw some things this spring for the men.

I keep pretty well, and have not, if I

[1] Turner's grand and astonishing picture, now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

sleep, time to be sad, though living in my quiet rooms at Corpus is very wonderful to me; but not painful. Going about London is *very* dreadful to me, every street having some bitter memory; but when I get away from it, and everybody is kind to me, I can't keep sulky. . . .

St. Valentine's eve, 1872.

My dearest Charles,—I sent you a little line this morning. I 've just seen at Ellis's your "Triumph of Max[n]"[1]—it is a very nice copy, and I told them I would write and say so. I had just seen a large paper one not much better in any way, and not at all so pleasant to look at.

I do not know if I ever told you how much I admire it, but you will like to hear that I am going to cut one all to pieces, and frame in raised mounts, the square banners with the women-shield-bearers, for the Oxford men

[1] A copy of the volume of superb wood-cuts known as the *Triumph of* [the Emperor] *Maximilian.*

to learn pen drawing from, and some of the Knights that carry them, the half length, only without the horses, so as to compel attention to the faces, plumes, and body armour.

I think you *will* like, as nobody yet has liked, going over the schools, when you come *home* — to England. It 's absurd to think of yourself as American any more ; but even if you do, all good Americans should live in England, for America's sake, to make her love her fathers' country — if not in the past, at least now.

Ever your loving

J. RUSKIN.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
Easter Sunday, '72.

MY DEAREST CHARLES,— I left my Denmark Hill study, to go back no more, on Thursday, and have passed my Good Friday and Saturday here, quite alone, finding, strangely, one of my Father's diaries for my solace, giving account of all our continental journeys,

from the time I was six years old, when he and my mother, and I, and a cat, whom I made a friend at Paris, and an old French man-chambermaid, were all very happy (yet not so much in degree as completeness) at Paris — my Father some twelve years younger than I am now. . . .

We leave England, D. V., on Tuesday the 9th. A line to care of Arthur Severn, Herne Hill, London, would find me probably sitting writing before breakfast at the window of my old nursery — whence I visited Paris for the first time. . . .

I am going to sell my Venice Rialto by Turner. It is too large for Brantwood, and I have enough without it, and it makes me sad. . . . I am so tired that this which I have written, in the idea of its being quite a slow and careful and proper letter, looks as slovenly as if I cared nothing for you, but I care for you though I can't write.

Ever yours,

J. Ruskin.

HERNE HILL, S. E., LONDON, 10th *August.*

I am myself going to give, this autumn, at Oxford, a summary of the points in the lives of the Florentines and their school as related by Vasari, i. e., assuming Vasari to be correct, what thoughtful conjecture may be made as to each life. Then I shall correct Vasari afterwards as I can, to make him understood, first sifting the points in each life from the rubbish. I shall do Verrocchio, Mantegna, Sandro Botticelli, Pollajuolo, Lorenzo di Credi, Perugino, and the Lippis, with what else comes in naturally — and I think it will be interesting. Nothing I have ever seen in mythic and religious art has interested or delighted me so much as Sandro and Perugino in the Sistine Chapel — Perugino at Perugia was another piece of new life to me.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
18*th November*, 1872.

. . . I will never take anybody's advice any more. I want somebody to help me against

you — you 're always too strong for me — the more foolish they are the better. . . .

You spoke of coming down with Ned on Thursday. Please do.[1]

LANCASTER, 27th *December*, '72.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I brought your Siena[2] home from Oxford with me, and have been reading it all the way down, having carriage to myself.

It *is* curious that the first drawing I ever made of Italian art should have been from Duccio, and that I should have sent it to you the day before I read the account you give of him — twenty times more interesting than Cimabue.

I was greatly surprised by the early dates you assign and prove for the fall of Siena, and also by your ascribing it in the end,

[1] I was established for the winter in London. "Ned" was Burne-Jones.

[2] An account of the building of the Duomo at Siena, afterwards published in my *Church-Building in the Middle Ages*.

so completely, to the failure of religious faith.

Q.,—and this is the only thing which during the whole day I wanted my pen to suggest, all the rest being unquestionable,—should we not rather say, the failure of the qualities which render religious faith possible, and which, if it be taught, make it acceptable?

How far religion made — how far destroyed — the Italians is now a quite hopelessly difficult question with me. *My* work will only be to give material for its solution.

My cold is nearly gone. I will do S—— her drawing and you yours, at Brantwood. I have been dining on turtle soup and steak, and have had more than half a pint of sherry, and feel comfortable — here in King's Arms Inn, with picture of Dickens's Empty Chair behind me, and his signature to it, cut out of a letter to the landlord. Volunteer band playing, melodiously and cheerfully. Mind

you get acquainted with a conscientious Punch.

P. S. Pitch dark day.

Q. (not a critical one). After that time of homicide at Siena, Heaven sent the Black Plague. "You will kill each other, will you? You shall have it done cheaper."

We have covered ourselves with smoke. "You want darkness?" says Heaven. "You shall have it cheaper."

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, 15th *January*, 1873.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — . . . I have had fourteen days of incessant wind and rain, and am stupid with disgust and wonder that such things should be. Nature herself traitress to me — whatever Wordsworth may say. No light to paint, nor temper to think; but I have been working at the instructions to my drawing-class. Everything now takes so much more time than I calculate — it is terrible. . . .

Love to you all, especially to S. I 've done

a bit of ivy, but it looks gloomy, and hope to get a bit of cup-moss for her instead.

Ever your lovingest

J. RUSKIN.

7th *February*, 1873.

. . . I will have the marbles sent down here.[1] I am going to make more and more a perfect home of this place. I have the gift of sucking bitters, and am just now quite uncomfortable because my house is too pleasant, and I don't like going back to Oxford.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, 8th *February*, 1873.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I send you an old sketchbook, full of scrawls done in the cold (with that excuse for never doing anything that I ought to have done to them) in the winter of '62, I think, or '61 — Crawley[2] will know.

[1] Some pieces of late thirteenth century Pisan sculpture, fragments of a font, which I had obtained for him in Italy.

[2] His old servant.

They now only give me sorrow and shame to look at — both deep. I ought perhaps to be very thankful that I am wise enough to think my ten years old self a fool, and that I am unhappy only by *not* getting what I wanted, instead of getting it.

I walked seven miles yesterday on heavenly short, sheep-bitten turf; climbed 1800 feet above lake among the snow; rowed a mile; superintended the making of a corner window in my "lodge," to be Crawley's house, and worked at Greek coins all the evening, without spectacles. I ought n't to grumble, at 54, to be able to do that. And, indeed, I *am* less discontented than I was at Lucerne, that winter. Perhaps I shall be quite happy just before I leave the world.

If there 's anything in the sketchbook you would like name put to, I 'll do it when I come to town, if you leave the book with me.

All good be to you that can be.

Ever your loving

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, Ash Wednesday,
26th *February*, 1873.

DEAREST CHARLES, — Your lovely little note just come, and with it the Dante marbles. Far beyond what I had hoped, and quite beyond all price to me. I have n't been so pleased for many a year.

I ought to be very good — now such a study as I have. Must tell you about it, or, rather, you must all come and see, in May.

Ever your loving,

J. R.

RUSKIN, (JOHN). Autograph Letter, Signed with Initials. 1p. 8vo, "Corpus Christi College, Oxford, March 20, 1873. To Charles Eliot Norton, with original addressed and stamped envelope.

Reads: "My dearest Charles: Can you be at home on Sunday for me—in the forenoon? I can't get to you before. I shall bring Connie to you on Monday, however. I hope you make her very happy . . . Ever yours, J. R."

IV

1873–1893

IV

1873–1893

After my return from Europe in May, 1873, ten years passed before I again saw Ruskin. They were years of grave change and sad experience for him. He continued to engage in dangerous excess of dispersed and exhausting work, and to yield to a still more dangerous excess of emotion. The intensity of his sensitiveness to immediate impressions, the passionate ardor of his feelings, the habit of uncontrolled expression reacting to increase the temper from which it sprang, continued to aggravate the bitterness of his resentment against the evil of the world and to deprive him of peace of mind. His unsettled religious convictions failed to afford him solid spiritual comfort and support. His writings, largely devoted to social questions, exposed him by their manner as well as by their doctrine to harsh criticism, by which he was wounded and embittered. He felt deeply the separation

which was growing wider and wider between himself and other men. His firmest convictions were opposed to the prevailing ideas of his time. He stood alone and like a prophet to whom his people would not hearken. Personal sorrows added to his troubles. His brain and his heart were alike overwrought.

Yet there were intervals when the natural elasticity and cheerfulness of his disposition asserted themselves, when the delights of nature or of art could still minister to his happiness, and when all the sweetness and generosity of his nature displayed themselves in their incomparable abundance.

His friends could not but be anxious for him, and they strove in vain to persuade him to moderate his exhausting career. For a long time the vigor of his constitution enabled it to endure the excessive strain to which it was subjected, but finally, in 1878, it gave way, and he was brought near death by a violent inflammation of the brain. The immediate attack passed, leaving apparently little effect. The monthly issue of "Fors Clavigera," which had continued unbroken for seven years,

and in which he had poured out his thought on every subject, displaying himself and his affairs with astonishing frankness and sincerity, was now suspended. It had been a dangerous mode of relief of his overburdened spirit.

From this time he was never safe from similar breakdowns, which recurred at intervals with more or less severity, with gradual permanent damage to his brain.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, 25th *June*, 1873.

DEAREST CHARLES, — I am not doing as you bid me. It is Saturday, and a month since your letter was written, and this is my first. I am very hard at work on my new elements of drawing. The scheme is too large for arrangement. I must do it piece by piece. When I was systematic, nobody believed I was, so it matters little.

But the time it takes one to determine how large a quatre-foil is to be drawn, how thick a line, etc. ! Things wholly unallowed for as taking time at all.

But really, I think I have done much lately, and that it *must* tell soon. I mean to get the Botticelli lectures out, somehow.

I am more curious about you and your life that is to be than about anything not my own business. I am more thankful for your friendship every hour. Love to you all — as much as I have left for any one living.

I hope you will be better pleased with the pieces about Scott than you are usually with "Fors," this next month.

Alfred Hunt has been staying with me. He is very faithful and affectionate to me, as I am to you, and

Ever your devoted

J. Ruskin.

Brantwood, Coniston, Lancashire,
15th *July*, 1873.

. . . I am writing, not against time, but constantly, what is becoming (in "Fors") almost a life of Walter Scott, and an important analysis of Frederick. Merely digests of Lockhart and Carlyle, but useful. My great

mental gift is Digestion, and my great bodily defect, Indigestion — it's odd enough; but really, the best authors appear to me very often as I suppose her cubs do to a bear. I hope Carlyle will take his licking as it's meant.

Also, I am slowly, but steadily, getting both "Birds" and "Botticelli" published, but the press correction is very painful to me.

And I am gardening and walking a good deal. And before breakfast — i. e., from half past six to nine — I read (finding that one must have some fresh wool on one's staff to spin with): i.e., half past six to seven, Greek Testament of 11th century, partly to master early Greek writing, partly to read the now to me very curiously *new* Testament with a witness: seven to eight, "Romance of Rose" in fourteenth century MS., a little before Chaucer; the very text he translated — delicious old French — worse than Joinville to make out, a great deal: eight to half past, "Cent Ballades," completing (slowly) begun

translation: half past eight to nine, "Callimachus"—very delicious and fruitful to me. I rest almost entirely after two o'clock. My woods want thinning, and I saunter through them, bill in hand. . . .

I am happier than I was at Denmark Hill—and yet look back to Denmark Hill, enraged at myself for not knowing its blessings.

I am always your lovingest

J. R.

OXFORD, C[ORPUS] C[HRISTI] C[OLLEGE],
December 2nd, 1873.

. . . I often hear your sermons over again. I attend to them very much indeed. I think my steady resistance to them the most heroic of all the efforts I make in the service of my poor—"lower than the angels." Sometimes, when I'm tired in the evening, they nearly break me down, and I'm so proud next morning of not having been beaten.

But I'm very sure you will be better pleased with the "Fors" for next year, if I live.

I go to Assisi early in the spring to work there, with what help I can gather, on a monograph of it.

I am surprised to find how well my health holds, under a steady press of work; but my sight begins to fail, and I shall begin with spectacles this next year.

I will find a bit of architecture for you, however, or, even with my old eyes, do you a bit that won't be copiable by the "bold" scholars.

HERNE HILL, 11th *February*, '74.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I am sitting in my old nursery, in the afternoon of a clear, *very* cold frosty day, wind outside sharp. I a little numb and weary, after drawing on Giotto's tower for a drawing example (I am pushing them now at last). The view through the bars put to keep me from falling out when I was little is much as it was — only the Crystal Palace is there, and a group of houses on the ridge of the hill, where the Palace Hotel is, — where my father and mother used to go

when they could n't travel any more with me. . . .

Send me all the remarks you can on Val d' Arno — they will be in plenty of time. I shall go down to Brantwood for a month, and then start straight for Assisi, about end of March. I have no pleasure whatever in the thought of going, but perhaps may find more than if I expected it. But I shall think of Siena, and many sad things, and at present Italy is saddest of all.

HERNE HILL, 13th *February*, 1874.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Your letter came to-night, after dinner, — on one side of the tray on which letters are brought up. . . .

I am so glad you like those Brantwood photographs.

It was a terrible disappointment to me, your not coming. No photograph can give you the least idea of the sweet greys and greens in the intense English richness of the moss vegetation, or the almost Italian beauty of the

Brantwood

lower end of the lake — all the photographs lose it in mist. I will send you a little sketch or two this next month, God willing.

HERNE HILL, Saturday morning,
St. Valentine's, 1874.

... I 'm going to drive up the hill to the Crystal Palace, and I shall play some games of chess with the automaton chess player. I get quite fond of him, and he gives me the most lovely lessons in chess. I say I shall play *some* games, for I never keep him waiting for moves and he crushes me down steadily, and my mind won't be all in my play, to-day, any more than Henry 8th at end of the play[1] — only the automaton won't say, "Sir, I did never win of you before!"

Thanks for your words about "Fors."

Ever your affectionate

J. R.

[1] The reference is to these verses: —

King Henry. Charles, I will play no more to-night;
My mind 's not on 't; you are too hard for me.
Suffolk. Sir, I did never win of you before.

Henry VIII. V. i.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD,
15th *February*, 1874.

. . . I played three games with the automaton — not bad ones, considering. Two other people played him, also, — an hour and a half went in the five games. . . .

I came away here in the evening, and am going down to Brantwood. I shall make you a little drawing of myself, positively, before I go abroad. Write for the present to Brantwood.

I have just put up half a dozen proofs of Turner's Rivers, etc., for you — all but one have some scratching or pencilling of his own on them.

PISA, 9th *April*, 1874.

. . . I have always thought you just as wrong in following out your American life, as you think me in following "Fors" to its issue — perhaps we each of us judge best for the other. Suppose we both give up our confounded countries? Let them go their own way in peace, and we will travel together,

and abide where we will, and live B. C. — or in the 13th century. I will draw, you shall write, and we shall neither of us be too merry for the other — and both much the stronger for the other. I really think this a very lovely plan — and sometimes we 'll go and have a symposium at Venice with R. B.[1]

Meantime, I can't in the least help you about Athens. I 've had to give up my Greek work. *Vita Brevis*. It needs a better scholar and younger life. I 'm going to draw what I can in Italy, and say a few words for Christ's sake against your Philosophers and Radicals yet, if I live; but I can't do more for Athena.

I have told Burgess to send you the two beginnings of myself I made for you. All that is good in me depends on terrible subtleties, which I find will require my very best care and power of completion — all that comes at first is the worst. Continually I see accidental looks, which, if I could set down, you would like; but I have been able to do

[1] Rawdon Brown.

nothing yet, only I let these failures be sent to show I have been trying. . . .

I am writing in the inn where we were together in 1870. I was bitterly wrong to leave La Spina undrawn, and the old River quays.

We had better arrange that Expatriotic plan at once. I'll write again soon from Assisi or Palermo.

ASSISI, 11th *April*, 1874.

. . . I have just got here, and have ordered all things to be ready in the upper church to-morrow to begin work with the Arundel society man, who is really enthusiastic and tender, but weak. I hope to get some important impressions made on him. But how difficult it is, to tell any man not to "improve" his copy! All one's little character and life goes into the minute preferences which are shown in the copy. In one's own feeble sort, it must be prettier than the original, or it is dead. A plum, even by Hunt, must be Huntized — and if your

Giotto copyist is, as nearly as possible, Giotto's negative on a small scale, the exact opposite of him, gentle when he is rough, and sad when he is gay, no lecturing will turn said negative to good account. . . .

I 'm so *very* glad you like my drawings. That one of the Fall of Schaffhausen [1] was the only one I ever saw Turner interested in. He looked at it long, evidently with pleasure, and shook his finger at it, one evening, standing by the fire in the old Denmark Hill drawing-room.

How Destiny does mock one, giving all the best things when one is too young to use them! Fancy if I had him to shake fingers at me now. . . .

SACRISTAN'S CELL, MONASTERY OF ASSISI,
Morning, *June* 19th, 1874.

. . . I am wholly occupied just now with Giotto's "Poverty." I 've done Botticelli's

[1] This drawing was made probably as early as 1843. It is a fine study, of which Ruskin had lost sight, and which turned up for sale in New York, where I obtained it.

Zipporah successfully [1] — but the "Poverty" is on a vault, and the looking up at it and not being able to change the distance torments me dreadfully. It is fine, but on the whole I am greatly disappointed with Giotto, on close study — and on the contrary, altogether amazed at the power of Cimabue, before wholly unknown to me.

Botticelli remains where he was, only because he could n't get higher, in my mind, after a month's work on him. I wish I could give him the rest of my life, but it must be broken into small pieces. If a blessing comes on the fragments, they may some day multiply.

I write the supplementary part of my lectures on him here, every morning, in absolute quiet, looking out on the Apennines — St. Francis lying within thirty yards of me.

[1] Just after the preceding letter was written Ruskin had left Assisi for Rome and Palermo. At Palermo he passed a few days with Colonel Yule and his daughter, and then returning to Rome, he spent May there, employed mainly in copying the Zipporah in Botticelli's fresco in the Sistine Chapel. He got back to Assisi early in June.

. . . The Cimabue is a discovery to me, — wholly unexpected, — Vasari mistaking as usual the place where he is, and everybody passing, as I did myself, the apparently coarse Madonna of the Scuola Greca. At last I set myself on it on a bright day and upset Giotto from his pedestal in a minute or two's close look.

Vasari is all right about the upper church, but not the lower. The large frescoes in upper church are grand, but it is one Madonna in the lower that has knocked me over. I 'm going to set to work on her to-day, D. V. — June 20th.

ASSISI, INN OF THE LION, *June* 20th.

. . . To-day your dear little note finds me after some wanderings about Rome. I am very glad of it, chiefly of your thought of Greece. But I can't travel now, except in comfortable places — so much has my too luxurious life corrupted me — and I don't know what I

may have to do, these coming years. So far from being in peace as you think, my days here are passed in daily maddening rage, and daily increasing certainty that "Fors" is my work — not painting — at this time. But Fors, pursued in deed, not word.

How you, with all the tenderness that is in you, can deliberately see this people perish, and yet tell every fiddler to go on fiddling, and every painter to go on painting, as if there were yet ears to hear or eyes to see, is the most amazing thing to me among all the various amazements which leave me alone in my work, or worse than alone — obliged, at each stone I lay, to drag up with me the lengthening chain of friends' reproof.

Note the date of this letter — you shall have a copy of what I wrote this morning in the Sacristan's cell — it will be interesting to you. I 'll write to Burgess.

J. R.

MONASTERY OF ASSISI, 21st *June*, 1874.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I am writing in my cell, within a few yards — just across the cloister passage — of the door into the lower church, in the angle of the transept, just opposite my newly found treasure of Cimabue.

It may be useful to you in your own work to know what I have — I may already almost say — ascertained about him. That he was a man of personal genius, equal to Tintoret, but with his mind entirely formed by the Gospels and the book of Genesis; his art, as you know, what he could receive from Byzantine masters — and his main disposition, *compassion*.

You will comprehend in a moment what a new subject of investigation this is to me, and the extraordinary range of unexpected interests and reversed ideas which it involves. Giotto is a mere domestic gossip, compared to Cimabue. Fancy the intellect of Phidias with the soul of St. John, and the knowledge

of a boy of ten years old, in perspective, light and shade, etc.

He can't by any effort make his Madonna look as if she were sitting in her throne. She is merely standing stumpily. But I am prepared to assert her for the sublimest Mater Dolorosa ever painted, as far as my knowledge extends, in the Italian schools.

I am going to draw her, and think I can, and you shall have a photograph (I hope a little sketch, also, quickly). But do you suppose my power either of drawing or seeing her, is merely because I have a painter's eye? I must have that, to begin with; but the reason I can *see* her, or draw her (*if* indeed I can), is because I have read, this morning, the ninth of Jeremiah, and understand *that* also. (I beg your pardon for the vulgar underlining.)

I wrote these two pages, and then went to my own work, rewriting or completing my lectures on Botticelli after my work on him in Rome. But it is grey and thunderous, and I can't write, somehow — have been awake

since four, and am tired. I walk to the window — there's a lovely little scene down in the valley beneath — steep down — five hundred feet. I see the bed of the brook (Tescio) all but dry; a peasant has brought seven or eight sheep to feed on the shrubs among the stones of it; and his wife or daughter is walking up to their cottage in a white jacket with brown petticoat, carrying an amphora on her head, and with a Greek pitcher in her hand, full (I can see almost into the mouth of the amphora, I look so steeply *down* with my glass upon her).

"Such a picturesque figure, and so classical, and of course you 'll sketch her," say my London acquaintances, enchanted at the idea — Charles Norton backing them, too. No, my good acquaintances and one friend, I shall go and explain to her why the bed of the stream is dry, why the sheep have to nibble among the stones of it, and why she has to go down to fill her amphora instead of having a fountain at her door. [Here a

hasty sketch of the Sacristan's cell, with which the letter ends.]

LUCCA, 12th *August*, 1874.

Art. I.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — This "Art. I." was to be the beginning of an art-grammar for a young Italian who besought me at Assisi to teach him something. In endeavoring to do which, I have taught him a little, but myself much.

Art. I. is to be, in such Italian as I can manage: "Every light is shade to higher lights; and every shade is light to lower shades," — from the Sun to Night, which alone are Light and Shade absolute.

Art. II. Every colour has its own proper darkness; that is to say, as soon as it can be distinguished from darkness, it is distinguished also from other colours. Therefore, you must not shade any colour with grey, for red darkened with grey is not dark red, but a condition of purple; and blue darkened with

grey is not dark blue, but a debased blue, and yellow darkened with grey is not dark yellow, but a condition of green. Therefore, the shade of every colour must be the darkness of itself. Normally, it is the shade of a hollow removed from the influence of reflection in a surface of that colour. A deep fold in red velvet is proper dark red; and a deep fold in yellow velvet, proper dark yellow.

Article three is to define red, blue, and yellow, and I am in a fix about dark yellow, or proper brown; which is dreadfully optical and puzzling.

I have your letter in answer to Assisi. My dearest Charles, I never meant to accuse you of not considering the poor, or of ill-management of your own life. It has been an incomparably wiser one than mine. But you are like Henry Morton remonstrating with Habakkuk Mucklewrath, or Pleydell pacifying Dandie — or as Lucy Bertram to Meg Merrilies.

I can't write more to-day.

Write — Hôtel de l'Arno, Florence. I'm there for a month yet.

LUCCA, 12th *August.*

DEAREST CHARLES, — I sent you a scrawl this morning, thinking it might amuse you a little, and before going to bed must answer about Cimabue.

Giotto is not dethroned — at least, not diminished — in his own real place, which is of human passion. In mystic and majestic thought, Cimabue leads wholly, and the Byzantines generally. Giotto and Taddeo Gaddi are loving realists of little things. The finest thing of Giotto's in Assisi is not the "Poverty" or "Chastity," but a little group of people in the street, looking at a boy who has just been restored to life, after falling out of a three pair of stairs window. The Christ, St. Francis, and Charity, are all three total failures in the great Poverty Fresco; and in the Charity, she herself and Fortitude are quite valueless; while Obedience in the opposite one is monstrous. But the sweetness

of a monk reading on the grass while St. Francis receives the stigmata, and the sudden passion of a woman clasping her hands and thanking God for the boy brought to life, are more pure and exquisite than anything of the subsequent schools.

I find the Spanish Chapel of boundlessly more importance than I had imagined. I 'm staying a month longer in Italy for this alone, hoping to draw Astronomy and Logic. I think the daring and divine heresy of Zoroaster under Astronomy — enclosed scrawl may remind you — quite exquisite; I can't make out whose they are, though. Not Gaddi nor the man called Simon Memmi at Assisi.

By the way, geography's globe *was* divided thus, and is thus :[1] —

Here 's rather a pretty bit I wrote this morning about the Music: "Under her sits Tubalcain, striking on his anvil with two ham-

[1] Here a sketch showing the globe divided originally into Asia, Africa, and Europe, now into Asia, America, and Europe.

mers. But he forges nothing. He looks up into the air and listens. And the sounds of the sheep bell on the mountains, of the chime and call and lament on the tower, of clashed cymbal, thunderous organ, far-thrilling trumpet — these he forges in thought, from the beginning of the world to its Judgment."

Of course this assumes that Memmi mixes him up with Jubal — on Giotto's tower they are separate. But it is curious that at Perugia, the other day, I heard the only bit of fine choral singing I *ever* heard given in a free-hearted way in Italy — out of a smithy, timed to the hammers — "harmonious blacksmith" to purpose, but very different from Handel's; this was a really grand, slow chant.

Ever your loving

J. R.

LUCCA, FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I am writing my account of Giotto's "Poverty," for you, and for others who care for it — and was getting

into some feeling and power with it, when I was entirely stopped and paralyzed by a steam whistle at the railway, sent clear through intensely calm and watery air at intervals of about a quarter of a minute for the last quarter of an hour — a sharp, intense, momentary explosive whistle, like a mocking Devil playing the "Lucca trumpet" in a high key — the most torturing and base thing that in all my St. Anthony times has happened to me. It comes every morning at my best worktime, and at midnight — it is a luggage train which can't make up its mind to anything, and whistles at every new idea that strikes it.

If you can *read* "Fors," — which I don't believe you do, — look at the bit I am writing — it will be the end of the "Squires" "Fors," for September. I stopped to write this to you at the words, "Charity is wound with white roses, which burst as they open into flames of fire." And the whistle of the Lucca devil is going on *all this time.*

I meant to have written to you at any rate, to say that I can't think what I wrote to put you on the self-defensive, to that extent, in this last letter. My dearest Charles, I never said that you ought to live, or think, otherwise than you do; I am only pained because you think *I* ought. I wish you enjoyed "Fors," and looked for it, and saw something more in it than a "monthly letter." I wish also you knew a little more the change there is upon me — unfitting for any other work — fitting me, I think, very definitely for this. . . . Don't you see that one *must* feel "grim" to the full extent of "Fors;" and it 's of no use to say one ought n't or that that "is n 't the right method"?

Ever your loving

J. R.

LUCCA, 18th *August*, 1874.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — As soon as you get the illustrated "Val d' Arno" you will be interested by the plate of Niccolo's Madonna,

and some others; I hope also by the distinction between "Greeks and Greeks" of the Baptistery font.

I've found it all out now. The effete Greek of St. John Lateran is real Byzantine — polluted at Rome to its death.

The Font of Pisa is native Etruscan. So is that of Pistoja. So are the masons of Como, who formed the Free masons. The race has held its own to this day; one of them drove me last night, with the same black eyes that are inlaid on the Font of Pisa, — the same sharp, ridged nose, a breast like a Hercules, — and he drove (and drives every evening if I would let him) like Auriga, before he died for his kiss. The infallible mark of the race and style in the sculpture is straight hair carved in ridges like a ploughed field.

I have here, side by side in the porch of the Duomo, Niccolo Pisano's first (known) sculpture (the Deposition) and an Etruscan reaper (June), with his straight hair and inlaid black eyes. He and February are the

only ones who have their heads left, for modern Italy, taught by America, considers it "the thing" to knock off heads, and the schoolboys rarely pass the porch without throwing a stone or two at it. (The *great* thing to do is to knock off the nose; but that is not always possible when the sculpture is high up.)

Niccolo has the bossy hair of the Greek Jupiter for everybody, and his great points in the Deposition are pulling out the nails with the pincers, and supporting the weight of the body as it falls. You will see in a moment how much follows from this, the Etruscan never losing his contemplative religious habit, and caring nothing whatever about Weight going down, but only about Spirit going up, while, on the other hand, Niccolo, with those pincers pulling the nail out, laid hold of the entire scheme of material and naturalistic art, good and bad; and with the arm of Joseph of Arimathea, catching the (*dead*) body of Christ, embraced

Michael Angelo and Rubens and all that they are, and mean.

My Etruscan drives me every evening to a valley which is entered through a glade of Spanish chestnuts, like that in the Cephalus and Procris; then the path goes over and under rocks of the hardest marble I ever struck, into groves of olive, which go up and up the hillside, for which the Pisans can't see Lucca,[1] but from which, on this side of them, I see as I climb, the Carrara mountains in their purple, and Lucca lying like a crown of gold on the Etruscan plain.

Ever your loving

J. R.

FLORENCE, 21st *August*, 1874.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — My discovery of this native Etruscan element has so beautifully cleared and composed my scheme given

[1] —al monte
Per che i Pisan veder Lucca non ponno.
Inferno, xxxiii. 30.

in 2nd "Ariadne" that I can't help — partly in exultation, and partly because I think you'll like it — stopping in my sketching out notes for next October's lectures on Arnolfo and Brunellesco, to give you the form they have taken.

School of 1200.

Chartres Cathedral — North.
Monreale — South.
Font of Pisa. (Etruscan) — Centralized.

Still all in a certain sense savage and Pagan. Broken in upon by Niccolo Pisano.

Then the Three Great Successive Christian Schools:

A. Arnolfo's and Dante's. *Christian or Pure Gothic.* Type — St. Paul's tomb under the 12th century form of basilica. The Gothic School is entirely Faithful and imaginative.

B. Brunellesco's. *Christian or Pure Classic.* The Classic School, nobly naturalist —

beginning to try its faith and rule level lines.

C. Perugino's. *Christian or Pure Romantic.* Horatius Cocles — Cincinnatus — St. Michael—Madonna—all seen through Christian Iris of colour.

Luini, Bellini, Botticelli.

(When I send you a photograph of my Zipporah (she 's really come nicely) it will explain to anybody with eyes; of course you 'll see it (I mean how pat and pretty it comes) without wanting Zipporah.)

Then — chivalry expiring — we get surgery and optics — Michael Angelo and Leonardo. . . .

FLORENCE, 23rd *August*, 1874.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I 'm in the Hôtel d' Arno, itself a palace once, opposite (street only 10 feet wide) one of the grandest of the old towers, with a mason's shop in the bottom of it. . . .

But that is not the point; I 've just done such a lovely bit — to my own fancy — of notes for lectures on Contemplative and Dramatic, that I must just scratch it over the Atlantic to you. You see, Lord Lindsay always talks of Contemplative and Dramatic, without observing that the nobleness of each school is in *what* you Contemplate and *what* you do. You Contemplate a "Lemon Peel and Pigs," if you 're a Dutchman, and a Maestà of Cimabue, if you 're an Etruscan. You have for Drama — at present in Naples — a policeman catching two parties who are chopping up a child. Or you have — of old in Pisa — The Last Judgment.

But of all the loveliest bits of acutely piquant drama of the loveliest sort, I think the one in the Spanish chapel beats. We have our modern dramas of Court Introduction, "The Queen receiving the Princess Alexandrina, or Russymutchka, or whatever she may be; His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales receiving the Lord Mayor and Lady

Mayoress, etc., etc." But of all piquant Introductions, here 's the *acutest* — "Eve introduced to Christ, with the Devil looking on."

Simon has done it, oh, so prettily!

Ever your loving

J. R.

FLORENCE, 26th *August*, 1874.

DEAREST CHARLES, — I am not without hope of a change in your thoughts about "Fors" and all my work, as you read the concluding letters of this year, especially one I 've been writing to-day, after returning last night from the Badía of Fésole, which I thankfully found uninjured — *wholly* uninjured in adjunct and fact, and with only one sign of modern Florentine life on it — a pencil scrawl on one of the pieces of its white inlaid marble, of which I will tell you another day; today I only want to say that it must have seemed to you I had only half read your letter by not asking you to send the St. Buona-

ventura life.[1] Please do, to Oxford when I get there this October; this morning I enquired for those you tell me of, — the Fioretti and Fra Jacopone, and quote the "utile e humile e pretiosa e casta," appropriately watching the people getting up on the other side of Arno and throwing their slops out of window with great crashes into the river, occasional drifts of spray in the descent — as of the Staubbach — into their neighbours' windows — occurring under the sublime influences of a thunderous and fitful wind.

"And the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters."

Cimabue's "Creation" at Assisi is the sum and substance of all others. God the Father in a circle of closely set, crowded, infusorial Angels; beneath them the Dove — beautifully drawn — in profile, not [a slight sketch], but [another sketch] (Goodness — that I can't draw it!); then Christ descending in

[1] *The Life of St. Francis*, by St. Buonaventura, which Ruskin had not read.

the form of Man; and the waters below beginning to take order under them; and the successive events then all crowded below.

I am more and more crushed every day under the stupendous power of Botticelli. But he is always — even at his grandest — a rapturous dreamer, or thoughtful, disciplined, practical reformer, while Cimabue lives in the solemn presence of the Maestà of God and the Virgin — the last of the great Greeks. But Botticelli — there are no words for his imagination, solemnity of purpose, artistic rapture, in all divinely artistic things; mightier in chiaroscuro than Correggio, brighter in jewellry than Angelico; abundant like Tintoret, and intent on completion like Leonardo — I never saw or thought such things possible till I went into the Academy delle Belle Arti this last time,

Ever your loving

J. Ruskin.

P. S. That dove 's wrong, after all. Cima-

bue's wings go *up* [sketch]. I confuse things now in a day, if I don't put them down instantly.

FLORENCE, 7th *September*, 1874.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I 'm writing "A Walk in Florence," for the English Respectable Tourist! — explaining to him Giotto's frescoes of St. Francis in Sta. Croce, and the Gospel of Works; and Simon Memmi's frescoes of St. Dominic and the Gospel of Faith. And I 'm very much pleased with my own bit of work as it 's coming; only I 've so much drawing to do. I 'm drawing Astronomy, and Music, and Logic, and Grammar telling little Florentine boys and girls to enter in at the straight gate (which really is too straight to be comfortable, as well as Grammar's own stays), and the Emperor, and the King, and Botticelli's Spring's ankle among the daisies; and I 've enough to do.

But in my account of the Gospel of Faith,

I 'm going to quote Lowell's St. Ambrose, but with the proper contrary of John Bunyan's Presumption's "Every vat must stand on its own bottom," and I 'm going to finish with this: "At least, you must be sure that you *are* a vase of crystal being filled by an angel with water of life, and not a gobbling little fish wagging your tail in a drain."

I 've had such a time of it with Donatello and Luca and all the unfinished M. Angelos to-day in the National Museum.

Ever your loving

J. R.

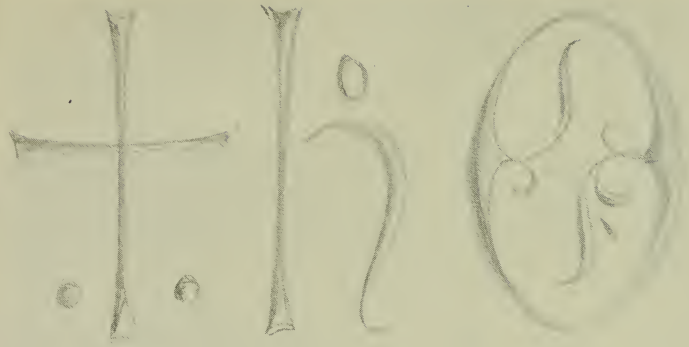
FLORENCE, 16th *September*, '74.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I 've been writing myself sick, not with fatigue, but interest, in describing the frescoes of Spanish chapel this morning, and must be off to my work on them in a quarter of an hour, but I have your letter and its scented herb, — very grateful to me, — and the writing is for three cheap Walks or Mornings in Florence with which I

hope to cut out Mr. Murray a little this winter. First Morning, Sta. Croce and Gospel of Works. Second, the Spanish chapel, and Gospel of Faith. Third, *Mio bel San Giovanni.* Please tell me over again what you told me about Dominican buildings, in San Domenico of Siena; it has got fuzzy in my head (not in my heart).

I send you three scrawls drawn on a ladder from the "June" at Lucca, — pure, native Etruscan work, of 12th–13th century — you 'll see what they mean; you 've got my letter about them by this time, I hope. I was too sanguine about noses — only February's nose is left now, of all the months. The "divine in all men exercise of the Will," according to Mr. Lowell, has produced that effect on them.

What an intensely simple fellow Lowell is! Read his paragraph about "Race" in "My Study Windows," written in the vain hope of establishing America as a nation. I saw a wall scratched down its new plaster here at



Dickinson – pure detent for [illegible] of best time
Thy – Pool wife outside [illegible] or Lucca mantle
– H. begun – of the inception, but just to
make the

Mont' Oliveto the day before yesterday, with a pattern out of the village mason's head, Greek — eighth century B. C. pure — and without a flaw in the genealogy, as I can prove.

Ever your loving

J. R.

LUCCA, 21st *September.*

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Coming here this evening, — dog, cat, and mouse-tired with trying to draw the Etruscan sculpture on the font of Pistoia — I found your dear little note. . . . I had been writing in the morning a piece a little making amends to Giotto, as I hope you will think, about four frescoes I have found, which nobody knows anything of, in a back cloister of Santa Maria Novella. . . .

It is a very difficult question, that about doing one's best. Here in a month at Florence I 've drawn Grammar, Logic, Astronomy, Zoroaster, Tubalcain, the Pope, the

Emperor, Eve, St. Agnes, Practical Religion, and a "found sheep," all in a very second or third best way.

If I had done my best, I could only have drawn one figure in the time. It is true it would have been worth more than the whole eleven, but I should not have learned the eleventh part of what I have, nor been able to prove what I now can, that poor old Vasari is entirely right in his account of that chapel.

The best thing I got in Florence, however, was a quick, early morning sketch of the woman and the man-child in Giotto's Apocalypse.

HÔTEL DU MONT BLANC, ST. MARTIN'S,
12th *October*, 1874, one P. M.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I received your letter of the 18th September three hours since, as I sate, after a quiet morning's work on Walter Scott, breakfasting in my father's room, with Mont Blanc grey against the

dazzling white eastern light of perfect autumn morning.

No plank, no stone, no garden litter, no cottage roof, has been stirred, so far as I can see, in all this village, since our morning walk [in 1856].

This village, observe. Sallenche is entirely spoiled, in the open part of it; but the dingle and all the hills are absolutely unchanged. The trees don't seem to me to have grown. It is like a miracle or a dream.

I saw Sirius rise over Mont Blanc last night at half past one, like Agamemnon's beacon, Orion above, blazing like a fixed flash of lightning. All star-lights in Italy as of mere star-dust and faded thrones, in comparison.

And I am *quiet* here, — for the first time these six months, — and after the faces of what is now average humanity in Florence, the face of the worst crétin here is as the face of an angel in its innocence and pitiable,

indeed, but not hateful, fatuity. The withered-apple Savoyard of average honest heart and quiet spirit — lovely and divine. The horror of those Italian towns now is unutterable.

I am *re*-writing my glacier lectures, and much more, in days of cloudless sunshine, one after another from dawn, and golden autumn morning over blue mist, to rose-purple sunset. . . .

Yes, I have n't been thinking of Eastern Italy. I don't know the Ravenna part of it; and I call Venice — Venice, and nobody else. She 's no more Italy than I am. She won't fit in but in a world scheme. (Don't think I 've modified, anyhow, my notion in the different titles given to the schools in my coming lectures, — they are only a partial glance in one direction.)

Thanks for all you say of "Fors." Very solemn things are happening to me. You see how my mind is leading me to a personal effort, made in simple life. I have also been spending and losing money at a great

rate in these last years, and must now live —not extravagantly.

I can't think how this horrid leaf got crushed. I can't write on it what I want— must enclose another which will show you I 've enough to think on, and decide. Meantime, I 'm writing, as I told you, on glaciers, and am ever your

Loving

J. R.

Also you see in "Fors" how all my thoughts are bent on certain spiritual problems, only to be approached in, I don't say monastic, but at all events secluded life. These, I believe, you think only morbid remnants of old days. It may be so. I should not be sad, if I did not feel thus. But they are still, you see, *questions* to me, and now getting imperative.

I 'll soon write again. I 'm always thinking of sending you things, never doing it— wretch that I am! I 've a great plan of sending now.

St. Martin's — Evening.

My dearest Charles, — The enclosed scrawl (tired in stupidity and writing both) may yet show you I was thinking of you. It was kept to carry news also of my last bit of work in Florence, getting the bas-reliefs photographed on tower of Giotto. I never did anything more useful.

I have ordered a complete set to be sent to you. . . .

You will see in an instant how precious they are. The Astronomy seeing through the vault of heaven to the Spirits of it, to my (intolerable, almost) humiliation had escaped me, in the bas-relief itself. The Hercules and Antæus, if you remember with it that of Pollajuolo in the Uffizi, — in which they are two exhausted wrestlers, H. himself at the last gasp *but* one, and A. at the one, — is the most striking type of the glory of Contemplative against Anatomical (always, I mean) Drama that I have yet got hold of. Turner would have given the Drama, but

otherwise than Pollajuolo. The hiding of half the body by the earth — the soft, unconvulsed death — how beautiful — in Giotto's (or Andrea's)!

I've done a furious six months' work. Went south through Cenis tunnel on 4th of April, back through it on 4th of October. Here since the 6th, or at Chamouni, in cloudless calm. I saw my old guide — 80, from 69 when last seen. A beautiful old man.

The Glacier des Bois is no more. Of that of our days is left a little white tongue of ice showing in the blank bed. . . . But the saddest of all is Mont Blanc itself from here — it is, to what it was, as a mere whitewashed wall to a bridecake. When the snow is level nearly, it holds on pretty well, but on the steep Bionnassay valley it has all flowed down and consumed away.

I have much to think of in this little room — of things that are as that snow.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
Last day of 1874, sun just down.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I cannot employ the last busy hour of 1874 better than in sending you my love. I have been looking out a few fragments of memoranda which may be interesting to you, enabling you to show people who care, how the work was done for the Stones of Venice; there's a little bit of brown cave bone which I drew for the heads of extinct animals on it, one day beside Richard Owen; a blot from Tintoret's Annunciation (I wish I had done more of these), and finally a little pen sketch of Edward Frère, on a letter to Gambart.

I am gradually putting my things into some order, I hope, and going over what can be turned to any good. I've been reading your notes on third Volume of "Modern Painters" this afternoon, of which I chiefly concur in the frequent one, "All this needs modification." Which I fear me it can never get. Perhaps a single volume of Aphorisms

may be possible to me, when I've done Oxford work, telling all I know.

You rebel abominably against my great chapter about Lawlessness. You know it is all summable in a sentence: "There can be no rule for doing what cannot be done twice."

Well, here's more love to you. Bitter, but bright, frost here, makes me fancy it must be like *there*.

Ever your loving

JOHN RUSKIN.

ASHBOURNE, DERBYSHIRE,
27th *January*, 1875.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I think I sent some sort of an answer to yours of November 9th. Perhaps not; for, as you feared, I had rather a bad time just then, . . . and was again somewhat seriously injured in health, going down to Brantwood in a state of torpor and feebleness from which I am but now slowly recovering.

I write to-day to tell you what may be of some value to you. The "Cockayne" tombs in the church here are of elaborate 15th century and Elizabethan work, and consist of recumbent figures on raised sarcophagi surrounded by niches, correspondent in design to the first Italian and French tombs, but so barbarous, ludicrous, and helpless in all the actual sculpture, so stupid in their savageness, that I feel compelled at once by them to read in a different light great part of our English history and literature. That any noble family, even in the remotest country place, should be such baboons as to put up these tombs in Donatello's time, is quite appalling to me. Also, measuring my strength and circumstances, and possible time, it seems to me now expedient to trouble myself no more with history, mythology, or literature, but to concentrate myself on what I have peculiar gift for — natural history, including sky (not that we've much left of that in England), in connection with Turner's work

only, and so end as I began. I much and bitterly regret that I cannot go on doing fresco copies of the greater Italians; but this would involve, I think, as I get older, too much effort, sorrow, and disappointment, to be consistent with my health.

I have not yet acknowledged the receipt of your catalogue and admirable illustrations of the Liber: nothing could possibly be better. But I do not believe you will ever have the satisfaction of seeing any result of your labours in America. There is not a tree of Turner's which is not rooted in ruins; there is no sunset of his which does not set on the accomplished fate of the elder nations.

I have been thinking much of my portrait. In the autobiography which will develop, I hope, in "Fors," into something more interesting than I had expected (for as I think over it much becomes interesting to myself which I once despised), I am perhaps going to try to give a portrait or two,

and may end with myself. But at present I 'm busy on saxifrage and stone-crop.

My best love to you all — particularly to S. And I am

Your loving

J. R.

All you said about my being among wrong sort of people has come home to me in a deadly way lately. I have been an infinite ass to let myself drift as I have.

HERNE HILL, 13th *February*, 1875.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — If I don't answer your letters on the instant, months go by somehow, so I send scrawl at once. How you can find so much art in those old sketches of mine I can't think; but as it is so, I 'll look you out more at once. I am, in fact, putting things, as much as I can now, where I think they should be if I went where last year's roses are, — not that I 'm at all beaten yet, but I 'm fifty-six; and strongly emotional lives with much

disgust at the end of them are not good at insurance offices. . . . The deadliest of all things to me is my loss of faith in nature. No spring — no summer. Fog always, and the snow faded from the Alps. But even through all this I can fight yet, if I can only carry on with rhubarb pills instead of a stomach. Grief kills me, not by its own strength, but by indigestion.

I think you will be pleased, however, with my Italian work, which will soon now come to you. My botany also pleases me, and I expect "Fors" will have much that interests you this year.

All that was so terrifically true you wrote about my friends being not fit for me — but it's difficult to make new ones. . . . But really, the one thing that I physically want is one of those Graces out of Botticelli's picture of the Spring. I can't make out how that confounded fellow was able to see such pretty things, or how he lived among them.

I hope Allen has sent you the fifth "Ari-

adne," and will soon have sixth out — but press correction hurts me more than any other work.

Bother your Parthenon. I 'm really sick of that one thing the Greeks did in architecture. I was in Westminster the other day — thought it finer than ever. But how can I help you in your work? It seems to me as if you gave all sympathy to me, and I none to you. I never feel so selfish in any other relation as I do in all mine with you; but am

Ever your loving

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
25th *March*, 1875.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I was so glad to see your hand, having got anxious about you; and, with all that is distasteful in it, your letter is gladdening to me, in one way, more than usual, — in its showing the longing to be back in our old country. That

you and I, with our insights and will to help people, should both be obliged to economies (I have not bought a Turner for years and miss the most lovely things in MSS. continually), — while any rogue with a glib tongue and cool head gets his £100,000 a year, is not one of the least causes of my writing of political economy instead of art, — useless, at present, the last, in our country, as in yours.

But nothing would beat me except the plague of darkness and blighting winds, — perpetual — awful, — crushing me with the sense of Nature and Heaven failing as well as man.

I have also been singularly weak and ill all this spring, and am obliged to take warning of many things, and give up some of the most pet possessions of hope. But many things are over, for me, altogether. My additional years begin to tell now in the fatal sense of there being no time to try anything again.

I want to answer on the day I get your letter, and am too stupid to write more.

Ever your loving

J. R.

Two months after the preceding letter was written, the death of Miss LaTouche, the woman to whom Ruskin's heart had for many years been devoted, closed for him a period of alternate hopefulness and disappointment which had kept him in a constant state of restless and exhausting emotion. It was a sad story from beginning to end. She died worn out by the stress of the conflict between her heart and her conscience, and he was left hurt with wounds that were little short of mortal.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
15th *July*, 1875.

DEAREST CHARLES, — I have not been writing, because that death, as you so well understand, has made so much of my past life at once dead weight to me that I feel as I did when I first got out of bed after my illness

at Matlock,[1] as if my limbs were of lead — mentally and bodily. This is so with me just now, and I only fight through by going on with mechanical work all I can — but the effect on my general health has been very paralyzing, and it was no use writing about it; also, my work has now at once and in all things taken the form of bequest, and I am reviewing old notes, drawings, etc., etc., and being my own executor as much as I can . . . and writing, if I can, some things that I want to say before ending — not that I definitely expect to end yet; and to the public I keep my head above water as if I had no cramp; hitherto, at least, I think so. My literary work seems to me up to its usual mark. . . . "Proserpina" is liked, and "Deucalion," which will have all my geology swept up in it, is liking to myself. If only I can keep my stomach in order.

Now, about the bust. I send you photographs of Carlyle,[2] but they are miserable.

[1] In the summer of 1871. [2] Of Boehm's statue of Carlyle.

Perspective of feet of course ridiculous, and all the subtlety of face lost. But Boehm is a jewel, not a Jew. A perfect type of intense blue-eyed, Harz-bred Germany. I *hope* he will like me, and *ask* to do me, — that will be ever so much better than if I asked him, or you either. But if he does n't I will. . . .

Ever your loving

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
17th *September*, 1875.

DEAREST CHARLES, — Little deserving a letter, I greatly weary for one. The summer is past, and the dark days are darker to me than ever yet, and fly faster. But I have done a little leaf-drawing and Turner drawing in my old way which may please you a little, and I 've been trying to get photos of the Italian book for you, but they will not come rightly; a very little darkening of the shade vulgarizes all. And in all ways I am disappointed and failing, yet still I hope advan-

cing in main battle. Only you don't care about my main battle. . . .

My old work haunts me. I don't like to let it all rot in the damp here, till you can't read any of its wreck; so I am going to try to edit some, with engravings, as I used to do, if I can find engravers, or else numbering the drawings, and leaving them for reference or publication by my executors. The geology and botany will, I hope, become classical books in education. I mean to collect and separate with extreme care what is really known of geology proper from mere theory, and illustrate it as best I can. . . .

I 've found myself rather weak in body this summer; the thing that chiefly tires me, however, is the continually dark sky, like a plague — all the rest is chiefly stomachic. If grief would only let one's stomach alone, I would manage the heart, well enough. Oh, dear, what 's this brown, horrid stain? Tea? I 'm forbidden tea by the doctor,

and it's high time if I throw it about like this. All possible good be with you.

Ever your affectionate

J. R.

HERNE HILL, 5th *October*, 1875.

. . . I am more cheerful than I have been for several years. David's behaviour when the child died is I think natural and possible, not because grief is a form of prayer, but because pure grief is not a disturbing element as the returning waves of steadily ebbing hope are. My actual work, however, is also more pleasing and interesting to me, coming into full ear out of its blade.

I hope you will begin to like "Fors" better, as it now associates itself with other things. . . . I don't like what you say of Froude. I like the man, and have learned much from his work. If it is romance, it is unintentionally so, and at present, to me, unique among history-work since Thucydides, for being of no side. . . .

BROADLANDS, 5th *October*, 1875.

MY DEAREST CHARLES,— You are the first person I write to from my new home. The Temples have given me a room here for my own, and leave to stay in it in the evenings instead of coming down to their late dinner — and say they will be generally good to me and take care of me; so I came down here to-day from my old nursery at Herne Hill, and am making myself comfortable in my new nest — a cloudless sunset giving me its good omen, over the sweet river and woods. . . .

COWLEY RECTORY, 30th *October*, 1875.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I 've just sent — late — to press the November "Fors," announcing that I have now on hand altogether seven big books going on at once — and I must always have a little book going on besides, to close the octave, of letters to you; for you will begin to take pleasure in my work again, now, if we both live. . . .

Meantime, I have been resting a little at Broadlands, and it is a great relief to me to be where I 've nothing to manage, and can go out in the garden without being asked what is to be sown, or cut, or sold, or bought, or burnt, or manured, or drained, or fenced, or carted, or — something or other that I don't know half so much about as the blackbirds. Then the servants are all nice, the cook especially; and she makes creams and jellies for me, and I go down to the kitchen and make experiments on glacier motion in valleys of napkin and have got the loveliest results. . . .

To-morrow I go to Oxford to give twelve lectures on Sir Joshua's lectures; then I 'm going to Brighton for the dark days, to see sunsets over sea, and Aquarium. Then, if all 's well, to Brantwood for the spring; and to Fésole and Siena perhaps, once more, for the summer — home by Venice.

It is very strange to me to feel all my life become a thing of the past, and to be now

merely like a wrecked sailor, picking up pieces of his ship on the beach. This is the real state of things with me, of course, in a double sense — People gone — and things. My Father and Mother, and Rosie, and Venice, and Rouen — all gone ; but I can gather bits up of the places for other people.

I 'm wonderfully well, on the whole, and doing masses of work — only my eyes fail — in languor more than lens. I can only see well by strong light. . . .

Love, very true, to your mother and sisters and children.

Ever your devoted

J. Ruskin.

Cowley, 14th *November*, 1875.

. . . You cannot have in America the forms of mental rest with soothed memory of other, far distant, sorrow, not our own, which is so beautiful in these old countries. How different for a man like you, a walk by our riversides under Bolton or Furness, or in

cloister of Vallambrosa or Chartreuse, from any blank cessation from absolute toil in that new land! Do come to us again. . . . Let us have a quiet time in Italy together, as soon as days are long, next year. What will a picture less matter to me? or a cipher less in my banker's book? Let us take a pleasant little suite of rooms in Florence or Venice — and we 'll economize together, and think together — and learn together — and perhaps — even Hope a little together before we die. . . .

BROADLANDS, 14th *December*, 1875.

. . . I have heard wonderful things this very afternoon. I have seen a person who has herself had the Stigmata, and lives as completely in the other world as ever St. Francis did, from her youth up, and — this is for *you* — she had the wounds more than once, but on one occasion conveyed instantly by a relic of St. Catherine of Siena.

And I 'm as giddy as if I had been thrown

off Strasburg steeple and stopped in the air; but thing after thing of this kind is being brought to me. I can't write more to-night. . . .

8th *January*, 1876.

DEAREST CHARLES, — In case of missing a steamer, I answer your kindest letter by return post — though only a word.

I am most thankful for its warning; and truly I need it, for the forms of disturbance that present themselves to me, not at Broadlands only, are terrific in difficulty of dealing with, because, you know the Middle Ages are to me the only ages, and what Angelico believed, did produce the best work. That I hold to as demonstrated fact. All modern science and philosophy produces abortion. That miracle-believing faith produced good fruit — the best yet in the world. . . .

Ever your loving

J. R.

13th *January*, '76.

. . . The pleasure you take in those drawings and scratches is infinitely delightful to me — almost infinitely amazing, except that I suppose you feel through their failure the intense and pathetic love of the places in which they are done.

It is true that I am burning the candle at many ends, but surely in the many dark places I live in, that is the proper way to use one's life. . . . There was a time in my work when it was tentative and stupid — to a degree now quite incomprehensible to myself. . . .

I enclose proof of fifth and roughly bound fourth "Morning."[1] It is woful to have to leave that pleasant work — driven out by fiendish modern republicanism too horrible to be borne with.

Here in England, Atheism and Spiritualism mopping and mowing on each side of me. At Broadlands, either the most hor-

[1] *Mornings in Florence*, of which there were six in all.

rible lies were told me, without conceivable motive — or the ghost of R. was seen often beside Mrs. ——, or me. — Which is pleasantest of these things I know, but cannot intellectually say which is likeliest — and meantime, take to geology.

Your loving

J. R.

20th *January*, 1876.

. . . I am absolutely certain that were either St. Louis, St. Francis, or St. Hugo of Lincoln here in the room with me, they would tell me, as positively as John Simon would tell me the disease of a muscle, that my ignorance of what they knew was wholly owing to my own lust, apathy, and conceit; and that if I chose to live as they lived, I should learn what they knew.

My perfectly firm conviction of this, and yet the distinct duty which I feel to cultivate the rare analytic and demonstrative faculty of me, rather than the enthusiastic one which

has been common to so many, will give a very singular tone to my writings, henceforward — if I am spared to complete any part of what is in my mind. I have sent today the first chapter of the "Laws of Fésole" to the printer — and have got the second plate home. Here 's a little waste study for the fifth plate, which you may perhaps like to have.

I have been looking at your "Vita Nuova" again lately. I wonder whether, when he was alive, you would have told *him* that "anything that disturbed him was bad for him"? One would think you looked on me as an alderman after dinner. All the same, it 's very true, and quiet after dinner is very good for me.

BROADLANDS, 1 *February*, 1876.

. . . I am being brought every day now into new work and new thoughts, and, whether I will or no, into closer contact with evidence of an altered phase of natural, if not supernatural, phenomena, the more helpful to me,

because I can compare now, with clear knowledge, the phase of mind in which J. S. and other noble Deists or infidels are, and in which I have been for ten years, with that which I am now analyzing in the earlier Florentines, and recognizing in some living Catholics.

To me, personally, it is no common sign that just after the shade of Rose was asserted to have been seen beside Mrs. T. and beside me, here, I should recover the most precious of the letters she ever wrote me, which, returned to her when we parted, she had nevertheless kept. . . .

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.
[*February* 22, 1876.]

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Actually, there is American blood in you; strongly as I have denied it. To think that after all your work at Siena, you can still think that the races of men were made to do their best work in heartily believing lies.

I wish you would read the "Memorabilia" again, I understand it so much better than of old. The enclosed letter may interest you. I think it will at least show you that all Spiritualism, however mistaken, is not cold.

I can only write this scrap to-night, but am

Your loving

J. R.

Lowell's "Dante" is very good; *but* the entire school of you moderns judge hopelessly out, of these older ones, because you never admit the possibility of their knowing what we don't. The moment you take that all-knowing attitude, the heavens are veiled. Lowell speaks of Dante as if Dante were a forward schoolboy, and Lowell his master.

CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, 1st *March*, 1876.

. . . My final work on Angelico at Perugia taught me much, last year, and the real difference between you and me, now, is in my intense "Practicality." . . .

I 'm just doing a most careful preface to

Xenophon — mapping Greek colonies and religion all over Europe, and am giddy with the lot of things that focus, now, out of past work.

I heard, day before yesterday, Crooke's lecture on the motive power of light. Black things first absorb, and then run away from it. . . . His little pith wafers behaved beautifully, and whirled, being poised in vacuo, blackened on one side, white on the other, on the approach of a candle, about five revolutions in a second, for slowest. In sunshine, one had whirled itself to pieces, the black so eager to get away. No saying what this may n't lead to.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

I have no *new* faith, but am able to get some good out of my old one, not as being true, but as containing the quantity of truth that is wholesome for me. One must eat one's faith like one's meat, for what good 's in it. But modern philosophy for the most

part contents itself in the excremental function, and rejoices in that: absolutely incapable of nourishment.

HERNE HILL, S. E., 20th *April*, 1876.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I 'm leaving H. Hill (my old nursery) to post quietly down to Brantwood; to-day, D. V., to St. Albans — to-morrow to Cambridge, then Peterborough, Grantham — Lincoln, etc. I hope to get down in about twelve days. The rubbishy scrawl with this is the view down the lake (about four miles long) from my own bit of moor — opposite hills from three to five hundred feet only, width from a quarter to a half mile — little Monk island in distance. Looking north, I have Helvellyn and the Wordsworth Fells, but this view to the south is of most rare and sweet beauty.

All these things are little more than a dream to me, now — the destruction of Venice, Florence, etc., being to me simply *fractus orbis;* and Rosie's death, *fractum cœlum*

Coniston Hall (with twisted chimneys) opposite Brantwood

(which Horace might as well have added, when he was about it) — and I am chiefly at present (slightly *pavidus*, however) trying to mend both.

I wonder when you will begin to understand me a little? It *is* against you that with all my practical and logical faculty — colossal as both are — I can't get my sums in addition right in "Fors."

The thing that beats me most of all is the Weather; but there 's a little watery gleam of sun to-day.

Ever your loving

J. R.

Regaining some fragments of his old religious faith, modified by new conceptions of the faith of the mediæval Church, and by dallyings with Spiritualism, Ruskin attained for a time a more cheerful mood and more serenity of spirit than he had possessed during recent previous years. A pleasant picture of him at Brantwood was sent to me in the summer in a letter by the late Professor Gur-

ney of Harvard University, a man whose untimely death can never cease to be a sorrow to those who had the happiness of being numbered among his friends. He wrote: —

"The day after we arrived at Coniston we received an invitation to a 'high tea' or 'meat tea' from Mrs. Severn, and the next day she called to arrange for our being rowed over. Pleasant as she was, I went over with some misgivings, which proved to be wholly groundless, as we have not had a more delightful evening on this side of the water, and Ruskin was everything that is considerate and courteous and kind. He first showed us his literary and art treasures while there was yet light; had tea laid in the drawing-room that we might enjoy the lake; talked delightfully, with a slight twinkle of humourous enjoyment of his own extravagance, when he trampled upon all the existing arrangements of society and augured its speedy downfall; read us bits of Cowley and Sir Philip Sidney, and, best of all, the preface, so far as yet written, to the edition he is to bring out of Sidney's version of the Psalms,

full of humour and nice feeling; and instead of coming away at nine as we had proposed, we tore ourselves away at half past ten or later; and instead of walking home as we had arranged to do, the faithful Downs, who wished his duty conveyed to you all, insisted on rowing us back as well as over. It was pleasant to hear him talk of his master and of his own pride in appearing in person in the 'Fors.' The row back in the dusky light was an appropriate close to an evening so delightful in all ways."

DOLGELLY, N. WALES, 2nd *August*, 1876.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I want to write to you every day, but must, at last, having had quite a feeling of next door neighbourhood to you this last month, in sight of Mr. Moore first,[1] and then in talk with Leslie Stephen, and with a very pleasant American traveller, Mr. Field.[2]

I was, of course, delighted with Mr. Moore;

[1] Mr. Charles H. Moore, then instructor, since professor of the Fine Arts in Harvard University.

[2] Mr. John W. Field, a most friendly and genial man.

and had most true pleasure in the time he could spare to me, increased by feeling that I was able to show him things which he felt to be useful.

I left, on Monday, my pleasant Brantwood, and Miss Thackeray, and Leslie Stephen, and my Joanie, and all, to begin movement Venice-wards, to meet Mr. Moore in Carpaccio's Chapel. Alas, every place on the Continent is now full of acute pain to me, from too much association with past pleasure, giving bitterness to the existing destruction. I do not know how I should have felt in returning to the places which my Father and Mother and I were so happy in, had they remained in unchanged beauty — but I think the feeling would have been one of exalting and thrilling pensiveness, as of some glorious summer evening in purple light. But to find all the places we had loved changed into railroad stations or dustheaps — there are no words for the withering and disgusting pain. However, when once I get there I

shall set to work to make a few pencil outline drawings from general scenes, such as are left, to illustrate the new edition of "Stones of Venice." It is no use to re-engrave old plates. I will make new drawings, giving some notion of my old memories of the place, in Turner's time, and get them expressed in line engraving, as best may be — then I shall omit pretty nearly all the architectural analysis of the first volume, and expand and complete the third. Your commented volumes will suggest all that needs to be done, though probably the line I shall take in doing it will be more divergent from that you hoped than I care to say, till I find out what it is really likely to be.

I walked up Cader Idris yesterday with good comfort, but find my limbs fail me in my attempt at such swift descent as I used to be proud of.

But I would fain leave all my printing and talking, and set myself to quiet study of geology with such legs and eyes as I have

still left, — were not the world too miserable to be let alone. . . .

I shall be away for Venice before you can answer this. It will be best to address there, but let the "Stones of Venice" when you send them (if not already sent) come to Oxford, as I shall not use them till my return. . . .

With love to your mother and sisters,

Your faithful and loving

J. R.

VENICE, 5th *October*, 1876.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — It always seems to me that whenever I write a careful letter, people don't get it. I 'm sure one or two long ones to you have been lost. However, I have yours, to-day, and sit down to tell you how my days pass. I wake as a matter of course, about half past five, and get up and go out on my balcony in my nightgown to see if there 's going to be a nice dawn.

That 's the view I have from it [1] — with the

[1] See facsimile.

Venice. 5th October.
1876

My dearest Charles

It always seems to me that whenever I write a careful letter, people don't get it. Six mails are a too long over to you have been lost. However, I have yours, today, and sit down to tell you how my days fall. I wake at a quarter to seven, always 1/4 past five, and get up and go out on my balcony in my nightgown to

if there going to be a nice day.

pretty traceried balcony of the Contarini Fasan next door. Generally there is a good dawn (nothing but sunshine and moonlight for the last month). At six I get up, and dress, with occasionally balcony interludes — but always get to my writing table at seven, where, by scolding and paying, I secure my punctual cup of coffee, and do a bit of the Laws of Plato to build the day on. I find Jowett's translation is good for nothing and shall do one myself, as I 've intended these fifteen years.

At half past seven the gondola is waiting and takes me to the bridge before St. John and Paul, where I give an hour of my very best day's work to painting the school of Mark and vista of Canal to Murano. It 's a great Canaletto view, and I 'm painting it against him.

I am rowed back to breakfast at nine, and, till half past ten, think over and write what little I can of my new fourth vol. of " Stones of Venice." At half past ten, I go to the Acad-

emy, where I find Moore at work; and we sit down to our picture together. They have been very good to me in the Academy, and have taken down St. Ursula and given her to me all to myself in a locked room and perfect light. I 'm painting a small carefully toned general copy of it for Oxford, and shall make a little note of it for you, and am drawing various parts larger. Moore is making a study of the head, which promises to be excellent.

He sits beside me till twelve, then goes to early dinner with Mrs. Moore and Bessie — I have a couple of hours tête-à-tête with St. Ursula, very good for me.

I strike work at two or a little after — go home, read letters, and dine at three. Lie on sofa and read any vicious book I can find to amuse me — to prevent St. Ursula having it all her own way. Am greatly amused with the life of Casanova at present.

At half-past four, gondola again — I am floated, half asleep, to Murano — or the Ar-

menians—or the San Giorgio in Alga—wake up, and make some little evening sketch, by way of diary. Then take oar myself, and row into the dark or moonlight.

Home at seven, well heated — quiet tea — after that, give audiences, if people want me; otherwise read Venetian history — if no imperative letters — and to bed at ten.

I am very much delighted at having Mr. Moore for a companion — we have perfect sympathy in all art matters and are not in dissonance in any others. His voice continually reminds me of yours.

And he 's not at all so wicked nor so republican as you, and minds all I say! But for all your naughtiness, I 'm always, your loving

JOHN RUSKIN.

VENICE, 16th *January*, '77.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I must at once thank you for your Christmas note, but can scarcely do more, being at very heavy work all

day long. . . . I can't get my own studies for Oxford completed, the Carpaccio colour being the most subtle and impossible I ever attempted, except Turner's. Giotto and Angelico tried me; but this is hardest of all. I get on with it, nevertheless, though slowly, and with much else — chiefly in thoughts good for Christmas of which . . .

7th *February*.

and so it stopped. . . . I 've nearly now done three drawings from Carpaccio[1] — one of the entire picture, one of the window with vervain leaves, the third, of the hand, — hand and clothes over the breast, full size. The hair has cost me terrific work. I thought Carpaccio had done it by felicity, but found it was art and cunning carried to such a point as to be totally unrecognizable from the felicitous lightness of Gainsborough. I had to do it all over again, putting literally every hair in its place, approximately.

I 've been four months at work on these

[1] From Carpaccio's picture of St. Ursula asleep.

three drawings, with other sketches going on, not slight ones, and a new history and guide in Venice. The detail of each day varies not much; nor in the detail of it ought you to take much pleasure — for I have none — except of a solemn kind. Time was, every hour in Venice was joy to me. Now, I work as I should on a portrait of my mother, dead. I am pleased with myself when I succeed. Interested in the questions of the meaning of such and such a bend of lip, such and such a winding vein, pulseless. You will be interested in the history of her life, which I can thus write. So am I; and "happy" — in that way in my work. But it is a different happiness from having my mother to read Walter Scott to me.

There is also now quite an enormous separation between you and me in a very serious part of our minds. Every day brings me more proof of the presence and power of real Gods, with good men; and the religion of Venice is virtually now my own — mine at least

(or rather at greatest) including hers, but fully accepting it, as that also of John Bunyan, and of my mother, which I was first taught. . . .

I hope my next letter will be able to report more actual accomplishment. . . .

Ever your grateful and loving

J. R.

I have been very "happy" — in such sense as I ever can be — with Mr. Moore, he *is* so nice.

BRANTWOOD, 31st *July*, 1877.

DEAREST CHARLES, — . . . I have no comfort now for anything unless in thoughts which you would not care for my telling you. I am nearer breaking down myself than I meant voluntarily to have run, — owing to the extreme need for doing all I could at Venice this winter — and I have reduced myself nearly to the state of a brittle log — which you may break before you can fetch fire out of, or grief — and what I do or seem to do is more a kind of lichenous greenery than any-

thing of my own; else I should have written, as you may well believe, many a day before now . . . .

P. S. I read your note — knowing how much pleasure it would give — to Joan and Arthur, who are here. You will be glad to know that when I read them the first page of my answer I was stopped by screams of laughter — partly subdued, indeed, complimentary — but real enough, because I was out walking with them yesterday and, it seems, gave neither of them the impression of being a "brittle log."

BRANTWOOD, 17th *February*, 1878.

DEAREST CHARLES, — Good things have "chanced" to me to-day. Perhaps, to many besides. I have had a wonderful letter from America, and would fain tell you what some day or other you will be glad to hear of the incredible.

I sent you some etchings. "Fésole" *is* going on. — Don't be angry with me — I *can't*

do it faster. Second number all but done — and it is nice. My love to your mother — to your sister.

Oh, how little I ever show you of the gratitude and love I have to yourself!

Your faithful

JOHN RUSKIN.

Written with Sir Walter Scott's own pen, given by him to Maria Edgeworth, and lent to me by Mr. Butler, to whom it came.

At last the catastrophe, long anxiously foreboded, arrived. In February, 1878, Ruskin's overwrought brain gave way. He was desperately ill. His dear and wise friend, the eminent surgeon and medical adviser, the late Sir John (then Mr.) Simon, hastened from London to Brantwood, and for a fortnight, while Ruskin hovered between life and death, did everything for him that devotion and skill could devise. Mr. Simon wrote to me on the 4th of March: ". . . I trust that the worst has now passed. . . . You know, without my telling it, all that has brought this dreadful disaster on him, — the utterly spendthrift

way in which (with imagination less and less controlled by judgment) he has for these last years been at work with a dozen different irons in the fire — each enough to engage one average man's mind. And his emotions all the while as hard-worked as his intellect — they always blowing the bellows for its furnace. As I see what he has done, I wonder he has not broken down long ago." . . .

Before the end of March convalescence had begun. It went on rapidly, and by June Ruskin seemed to all intents restored to entire health. He soon fell into his common modes of life.

On the 4th of August Mr. Simon wrote again to me: ". . . It is now more than three months since I saw him, and I studiously avoid direct correspondence with him; but I think I know his state fairly well, and can tell you as much about him as if we had recently been together. In bodily health he appears to be as well as needs be, and in mind he shows no such fault as would strike casual observers. He appears to be fairly cautious against dangers of re-upset: perhaps not so abstinent as I should wish him to be from

use of pen and ink, but, for him, self-restraining; and he professes to be on his guard against over-colloquism."

As a result of his illness Ruskin resigned his professorship at Oxford, but he would not give up other work.

HERNE HILL, Tuesday.
[23d *July*, 1878.]

DEAREST CHARLES, — I have n't read your last letter! but I can answer it at least, and at last, so far as to tell you with some security that I 've got most of my strayed wits together again, for better or worse, and have for the present locked the gate they got out at, and they seem all pretty quiet and very much ashamed of themselves, so I hope the best for them.

The Doctors say it was overwork and worry, which is partly true, and partly not. *Mere* overwork or worry might have soon ended me, but it would not have driven me crazy. I went crazy about St. Ursula and the other saints, — chiefly young-lady saints, — and I

rather suppose had offended the less pretty Fors Atropos, till she lost her temper. But the doctors know nothing either of Ste. Ursula or Ste. Kate, or Ste. Lachesis — and not much else of anything worth knowing.

The chief real danger of the delirium, I believe, was not in the brain disease itself, which was a temporary inflammation, running its course, and passing, but in the particular form it took during the first stages of recovery — the (quite usual, I believe, in such cases) refusal to eat anything; not that I did n't want to, but I would n't take it out of a cup with a rose on it, or the like, — and so on, till poor Joan was at her wit's end, nearly — but her wits were longer than mine, and held on. How she ever got through it, I can't think, for I took to calling her hard names at one time, and did n't know her at another.

However, here she is, and well; and here I am, not much the worse in looks, people

say; and I believe, if anything, a little bit wiser than I was before, — but *very* little.

Practically, I can go on with my Botany and Geology, and with a *little* Turner work, but nothing else, and no more of that than I can do without the least trouble. *Therefore*, I could n't read your letter, nor can I take up the Turner etching business in the least. I 've far more on my hands for Fésole than I shall get through this year with all the time I have or can have, and will not add to it by a grain of pains in any other direction. . . . This is all I can write to-day.

Ever your loving

J. R.

DUNIRA, CRIEFF, N. B., 25th *September*, 1878.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — At last I think I may tell you that you need not be seriously fearful for me any more, except as for all mortal creatures, for I have passed a week of total idleness, with some applause from my doctors, and no great discomfort to myself,

and think the practice of doing nothing inures me to that hardship far more quickly than could have been expected.

The "Liber Studiorum" facsimiles are perfectly lovely, and for all practical purposes whatever as good as the originals.[1]

Love to you all, ever and ever

Your grateful

J. Ruskin.

I am doing fairly good work on "Proserpina," I think, and on "Fésole," which is turning out a different sort of thing from the old "Elements," and I hope a better sort of thing. But it will include whatever was really useful in them.

Brantwood, 26th *November*, 1878.

My dearest Charles, — I am profoundly thankful for your letter, most chiefly in its assurance of your continued health and power, which are really at my heart more than any other things hoped for relating to my per-

[1] I had had thirty of the etchings of the *Liber Studiorum* reproduced in fac-simile by the Heliotype Printing Company.

sonal friends, — either for their own sake or for that of any desires I have that what I have endeavoured to do may be carried forward. . . .

To-day (Monday — date guessed above), I believe the comic Whistler lawsuit is to be decided. I enclose you a copy of my last " instructions " to my lawyers. . . .

I keep fairly well, on condition of doing only about two hours' real work each day. But that, with the thoughts that come in idleness, or as I chop wood, will go a good way yet, if I live a few years more.

I hope the III " Fésole " will be with you nearly as soon as the II, and two more " Proserpinas," not bad ones, are just done, too.

Ever your lovingest

J. Ruskin.

Brantwood, 25th *February*, 1879.

. . . What will come of Dante in America? I believe a good careful account of the vision of Hell I had myself would be more to the purpose. There was one very tremendous

scene of a blue-and-purple hot fire which I wish I could paint. It was very beautiful — other bits were very much the contrary; but as facts of delirium, highly instructive. It was just this time last year. I 've got a horrible cold in my head — but otherwise never felt much better. My vile writing means much laziness — not shakiness — and partly cold hands. Lake frozen again this morning, a mile square.

BRANTWOOD, 27th *February*, '79.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I took out a feather to begin for you this morning; but shyed it — and took to sorting out sketches.[1] I have found some that I am sure you will think useful; others which I believe you may take some pleasure in, partly in friendship, partly in knowledge of the places. I am putting nearly all I have of Assisi, but the best are at Oxford — they will be more useful in your hands than any one else's, and

[1] I was arranging for an exhibition of Ruskin's drawings.

perhaps of more in America than in England.

I begin to think that it is of no use talking to a country in her decline. What was the use, even yet, of their teachers to them — Jeremiah, or Horace, all the same. But in a new country, one way or another, a man will have power.

Many of these sketches I feel disgraceful to me — but I send them for such pleasure as they may give you. Giotto's "Poverty," for instance. The one you ask especially for I am a little afraid to risk, for it is in a part of the fresco that nobody but I could have made out. I will try to copy it: the St. Mark's copy appals me a little as I think over it to-day — but I've had bad cold and stomach illness, and am much down. I'm signing and dating all the sketches — on back, if not front. Shall I risk all by one ship? I will wait your answer before sending the best; a certain set I will get ready and despatch at once.

Ever your loving J. R.

I have been speaking as if they were all to stay. I 'm not sure that they may not.

FRIDAY — 28th — evening.

I am better, though I was uncomfortably ill last night, and being summoned to London to give evidence on a charge of forgery, variously painful to me, was considering whether I would go or not — I greatly trust in the Sortes Horatianae, as well as Virgilian, at least, for me, — and opening my Horace in the morning at "Mors et fugacem,"[1] determined at once to go: and have been much more comfortable in mind and body ever since. . . .

BRANTWOOD, *Easter Monday*, 1879.

MY DARLING CHARLES, — I have to-day your delightful note of the 31st. . . .

I think that book on the European power of Italy would be a very glorious thing to do. It is certainly unknown. People fancy they civilized themselves! and that they could have

[1] Mors et fugacem prosequitur hominem. *Carm.* III. ii. 14.

had Shakespeare without Verona, and Blackfriars Bridge without St. Francis. (I 've just been finding a place for my " Fioretti " in my fixed library here; Oxford finally dismantled.) But please set to work on that book at once. I 've put off everything I meant most to do, till I feel as if I had n't ten days to live.

We had snow and hail three days last week, and as I look up from my paper the sun touches silver streaks on the mountains. But we 've had snowdrops for six weeks back — they 're all over now, and the daffodils all a dazzle.

Ever your loving

J. R.

We launched my own first boat on Saturday — larch-built as thoroughly as boat can be — with a narrow stern seat, for one only, and a Lago di Garda bow. I had a nice pretty niece of Joannie's to christen her for me — " the Jumping Jenny." (" Ste. Genevieve " on the sly, you know) — and the following benediction was spoken over her: —

Waves give place to thee,
Heaven send grace to thee,
And Fortune to ferry
Kind folk, and merry.

She 's my first essay in marine architecture, and the boat-builders far and near approve!

BRANTWOOD, 4th *June*, 1879.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — The sad closing sentences of your letter efface from my mind most of the rest of it. For indeed it is only by my own follies and sins that I have fallen so far short of the knowledge of good as to be now unable to cheer you — by blaming you — and saying, Why should blindness be darkness — and why the coming of Death a Sorrow? It is only in utter shame and self-reproach that I ever allow myself (or cannot help myself) in despondency; and the very wildness of howling devilry and idiocy in the English mob around me strengthens me more than it disgusts — in the definiteness of its demoniac character. To see the devil

clearly is in the 19th century all that less than saints can hope for — but I am content with so much of Apocalypse as all that I deserve; and with the absolute sense that he and I are not of the same mind.

It is very foolish of me never to be able to get over the notion of the Atlantic between us, so as to write notes as I should if you were on the other side of the lake. I 've much to tell you that would please you — but except that the St. Mark's [1] is well on, and a pheasant's feather and spray of cotoneaster done (I send them to Oxford to be looked at, to-day, to spite them that they 're to have no more of the sort but that you are wiser over the water) — I won't tell you anything to-day, that I may be forced into writing again to-morrow — except that the anti-hypæthral pamphlet [2] is a really grand piece of work, exemplary in matter and manner, and a noble

[1] A water-color drawing of admirable quality.

[2] *The Hypæthral Question: An Attempt to determine the Mode in which . . . a Greek Temple was lighted.* By Joseph Thacher Clarke. Harvard Art Club Papers, No. 1.

"number one" of such essays. Its glacial tone of infidelity may be forgiven to a youth who has studied Doric only.

Ever your loving J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 9th *July*, 1879.

. . . I get very little done now of anything — but am on that condition, very well; and I hope that what I do get done is not apoplectic. I'm doing the Laws of Plato thoroughly. Jowett's translation is a disgrace to Oxford, and how much to Plato, — if he *could* be disgraced more than by everybody's neglect of him, — cannot be said, and I must get mine done all the more. I 'm at work on Scott again, too, and some abstract questions about poetry and drama, of which I know more than I did of old.

HERNE HILL, 1st *November*, 1879.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have not answered your last letter — and to-day I take up one of Dec. 20, 1875, when your children

and Moore's little girl, and Henrietta Child were playing (preparing their play of) King Adland and King Estmere, and think of myself as beginning to play in the last act of my world play, and of you, with your not so far carried-on part, but both of us, now, without any one to hear the plaudit (if plaudit be). Was your mother — to you — in this, as mine to me, the inciter and motive-in-chief of what one did for praise? Not that she did not uphold me in all that was right — praised or not — but still — I would have done much to please her with the hearing of it only. As for instance —

Well, it 's no matter. . . .

I was n't quite pleased with your account of their reading "Maud" and so on. Much too close hothouse air they seemed to me to be in — and I fancy that my own early limitations to Shakespeare and Homer were more healthy — but I don't know — perhaps they only made me take more violently to Shelley — who did me no end of harm afterwards.

I wonder if it will give you any pleasure to hear that my museum is fairly now set afoot at Sheffield, and that I am thinking of living as much there as possible. The people are deeply interesting to me, and I am needed for them and am never really quiet in conscience, elsewhere.

Write — if at all just now — to Herne Hill.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, Sunday, 16th *May*, 1880.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — We 've had two months of fine weather, and I 've been paintting and digging. I could have sent you a scrap like this before, but was ashamed — and now I 've been getting into a lot of new work on Scott, and never get a line of letters written at all — only I won't give any of my drawings to America. They would not be of any real use — I know that more and more, by their uselessness here — and they 're worth

money to me besides — and I 'm not going to fleece myself any more. I've done enough.

But I 'm not less your

Ever loving and grateful

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, 20th *January*, '81.

DEAREST CHARLES, — Very thankful I was for your letter of New Year, received this morning. Many a thought I 've had of you, but at Christmas time I was not myself — the over-excitement of an autumn spent in France leaving me much pulled down. I am better now (though my hand shakes with cold to-day), and can report fairly of what is done and doing.

I found Chartres, both castle and town, far more spared than I had thought possible, and more of historical interest than I had ever dreamed in Amiens; and the book[1] sent with this is the first of what I believe will bring out more of the at present useless

[1] *The Bible of Amiens.*

feelings in me than any work lately undertaken.

When I first looked at your book[1] I felt a chill from the tone of it (in the points you know of) far more than I ever feel, or could feel, in talking with you; but it will furnish me with just what I want of the most definite and trustworthy facts — and these curried with a little spice of old Jerome and Knox — as you know they are mixed in me — will give, I believe, more of the zest of that old life than has yet been got in history.

I have still eye and hand enough to draw, or even etch what I want, if I can only get time; and I have just laid my hand on a young assistant who can get more of this spirit of sculpture than I can myself. The people over there get interested themselves when I stay a while with them, and I hope to be allowed to cast things for the Sheffield Museum and leave, if I live yet a few years

[1] *Church-Building in the Middle Ages.*

more, more than enough to show what Gothic was. . . .

The Venetian head you gave me is in my new dining room here, and you should see the view through the window beside it, not to speak of much else which I can't picture to you, of moorland and wood, which you would like to walk in, as we used to do at the Giesbach.

This dull letter will I hope bring a brighter one after it, but I answer by return of post, though to-day with cold wits — not heart.

Ever your loving J. RUSKIN.

The illness of 1878, although it seemed to pass without leaving serious effects, marked virtually the close of work accomplished by Ruskin with his full powers. His mind, as his letters show, continued as active as ever. The diversity of his interests did not diminish, and each in turn was pursued with exhausting enthusiasm. He gave himself no rest, and, rejecting the counsel of Prudence (for him the most difficult of the virtues), he pursued a course which could not but end in renewed disaster. In 1881, after several pre-

vious threatenings, a fresh attack of trouble in the brain broke him down for a time, and this was followed the next year by a similar, but still more serious and alarming attack. In each instance the illness passed, having apparently done little harm. From each of them Ruskin recovered without consciousness of injury, and without loss of confidence in his own powers, so that in 1883 he accepted reëlection to his Oxford professorship, and began to lecture again not only at the University, but in London and elsewhere.

I made a short visit to England in the summer of 1883, and again in that of 1884, and in both years spent some days at Brantwood. Ruskin, as I have already said, had changed greatly in the ten years since our last meeting. I had left him in 1873 a man in vigorous middle life, young for his years, erect in figure, alert in action, full of vitality, with smooth face and untired eyes; I found him an old man, with look even older than his years, with bent form, with the beard of a patriarch, with habitual expression of weariness, with the general air and gait of age. But there were all the old affection and ten-

derness; the worn look readily gave way to the old animation, the delightful smile quickly kindled into full warmth; occasionally the unconquerable youthfulness of temperament reasserted itself with entire control of manner and expression, and there were hours when the old gayety of mood took possession of him with its irresistible charm. He had become, indeed, more positive, more absolute in manner, more irritable, but the essential sweetness prevailed. Given his circumstances, no ordering of life could have been more happy for him than that at Brantwood. He was the object of the most loving and watchful sympathy and care. His cousin, Mrs. Severn, was at the head of his household, and the best of daughters could not have been more dear and devoted to him. Her children kept the atmosphere of the home fresh and bright; the home itself was delightful, beautiful within with innumerable treasures of art, and surrounded without by all the beauties of one of the fairest scenes of the English lake country. A pleasanter home, or one more lovely in its surroundings and more appropriate for him, could not have been desired.

BRANTWOOD, 24th *March*, 1881.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I 've just read your dear letter to me on my birthday, after having another bite or two of Nebuchadnezzar's bitter grass. I went wild again for three weeks or so, and have only just come to myself — if this be myself, and not the one that lives in dream.

The two fits of whatever you like to call them are both part of the same course of trial and teaching, and I 've been more gently whipped this time and have learned more; but I must be very cautious in using my brains yet awhile.

I can't make out why you like that "Bible of Amiens." I thought you had given up all that sort of thing.

I shall have some strange passages of dream to tell you of as soon as I am strong again. The result of them, however, is mainly my throwing myself now into the mere fulfilment of Carlyle's work.

Say words of him — say you. Are not his

own words written in white-hot fire on every city-wall of Europe?

Read "Past and Present" again, *now*.

This was the main part of the cause of my dream. The other was what I talked of once to you at Prato (beside Filippo Lippi).

I 'll write soon again — God willing.

Ever your lovingest

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, 26th *April*, 1881.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have your little note of the 13th, in a cluster of other variously pleasant in a minor way. . . .

And with the more enjoyment that I don't feel any need for doing or "nothing doing" as I 'm bid! but, on the contrary, am quite afloat again in my usual stream, and sent off (retouched) two dozen pages of lecture on Dabchick to printer, only yesterday, besides painting a crocket of Abbeville in the afternoon a great deal better than I could when we were there in '68. (Goodness! 13 years

ago — it *ought* to be better anyhow.) And, the fact is, these illnesses of mine have not been from overwork at all, but from over-excitement in particular directions of work, just when the blood begins to flow with the spring sap. The first time, it was a piece of long thought about St. Ursula; and this year it was brought on by my beginning family prayers again for the servants on New Year's Day — and writing two little collects every morning — one on a bit of gospel, the other on a bit of psalm. They are *at least* as rational as prayers usually are, but gradually I got my selfishness — the element you warned me of in "Fors," too much engaged — and, after a long meditation on the work of the "other seventy" (Luke x, beginning) and the later Acts of Apostles, got in my own evening thoughts into a steady try if I could n't get Rosie's ghost at least alive by me, if not the body of her. . . .

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 18th *July*, '81.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Moore writes to me from North Conway, N. H. ("New Hell," I suppose) but I don't know if he lives there or whether he expects any answer to his letter — anyhow here 's one enclosed, if you 'll please read it and send it him. There 's some general talk on America which you ought to see, too.

. . . It really makes me a little more indulgent to the beastliness of modern Europe, to think what we might possibly have got to see and feel by this time, but for the various malaria from America.

I 'm working rather hard on the history of Amiens, and hope to get some bits of historical sculpture cut out of it which will come into good light and shade — chiefly light; and I 've just finished two numbers of "Love's Meinie," which will come to you the moment I 've a clean proof. I 've sent in the last revise.

Sheffield also in good progress.

Ever your affectionate J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 29th *August*, '81.

You will soon have some books, I hope, showing what I am about. . . . Early post to-day, and I 've the house full of people. Joan 's well and in good feather, and I 'm just what I always was, except a little crosser when I 'm bothered and a little merrier when I 'm not.

Nearly a year passed after this letter was written before Ruskin wrote to me again. The two following letters afford the sad explanation of his silence.

FROM LAURENCE I. HILLIARD.

BRANTWOOD, 15 *October*, 1881.

DEAR MR. NORTON, — . . . I am sorry I cannot give you a very satisfactory account of Mr. Ruskin's health. He is almost as active as ever, and is just now deeply interested in some experimental drainage of a part of his little moor, which he hopes to be able to cultivate; but he seems more and more to find

a difficulty in keeping to any one settled train of thought or work, and it is sad to see him entering almost daily upon new schemes which one cannot feel will ever be carried out.

So far as he will allow us, we try to help him, but the influence of any one of those around him is now very small, and has been so ever since the last illness. I hope that this mistrust of his friends may some day wear off, and that if you are ever able to come and see him, you will find him in a happier frame of mind. . . .

Yours most sincerely,

LAURENCE I. HILLIARD.

Mr. Hilliard was a young man of great charm and large promise, who acted for a while as Ruskin's secretary. His early death was a grave loss to Ruskin, for the services which he rendered were inspired by old family affection, and their value was enhanced by the sweet and strong qualities of his nature.

FROM G. COLLINGWOOD.

BRANTWOOD, *March* 7, 1882.

DEAR SIR, — Please forgive my opening your letter, and be patient for an answer, because Mr. Ruskin is away from home, and unwell, as he has been for months; but now worse, so far as I can gather. It has been so difficult to approach him on any subject but the most commonplace, that though we have often tried to get him to send kind words to Cambridge, he always turned the subject. His illnesses have mixed most of his oldest and best friends with delirious dreams and unkind hallucinations. That is why, and that 's the only reason why you don't hear from him. When I came to live here last summer I found him dreadfully altered; and am sure if you could see him for a day, you would find that it is not ill-feeling, but ill-health of mind and body, which makes him shy of reminiscences, and very irritably disposed even to those whom he endures about him.

As soon as ever he is a little better, and I can summon up the courage, he shall have your note. . . . I 'm under orders to save him all correspondence, and this is my excuse for what you might think impertinence. . . .

Yours very respectfully,

G. COLLINGWOOD.[1]

AVALLON, 30th *August*, '82.

MY DARLING CHARLES, — I have just come in from morning work, drawing scrolls and frets — Greek fret with the rest — on the most wonderful 12th century porch I ever saw, Pisa not excepted. Pisa (baptistery door) is lovelier, but *this* is the fierier; Greek workmen from the south must have done it — or the devil himself, for such straight away splendidness in every touch I 've never, as I say, seen yet.

Well, I got your little note with that blessed news of the Carlyle and Emerson letters the first thing this morning, before

[1] Mr. Collingwood, Ruskin's faithful friend and assistant for many years, and his sympathetic official biographer.

going out. It had been lying for some days at Dijon, but I don't lose time in answering. I had in mind to write to you for a month or two back, ever since shaking off my last illness, but one feels shy of writing after being so extravagantly and absurdly ill. I got faster better this time, because Sir William Gull got me a pretty nurse, whom at first I took for Death (which shows how stupid it is for nurses to wear black), and then for my own general Fate and Spirit of Destiny, and then for a real nurse, . . . and slowly — and rather with vexation and desolation than any pleasure of convalescence — I came gradually to perceive things in their realities; but it took me a good fortnight from the first passing away of the definite delirium to reason myself back into the world.

I have not been so glad of anything for many a day as about those Emerson letters; nevertheless, one of my reasons (or causes) of silence this long time has been my differing with you (we *do* differ sometimes) in a

chasmy manner about Froude's beginning of his work.[1] . . .

I 'm fairly well again, but more sad than I need say about myself and things in general. But I can still draw, and to-morrow I 'm going to Dijon, and on Thursday I drive to Citeaux, and on Friday I hope to get to the Jura, and drive over them once more, getting to Geneva and Bonneville early in next week; then by Annecy over little St. Bernard and so on to Genoa and Pisa. You might be there nearly as soon as I shall be, if you liked to! Ever your loving

J. Ruskin.

Sallenche, 11th *September*, 1882.

My darling Charles, — I think a good deal of you here, and of other people that are not here, without deserving to be scolded for being anywhere else.

I was trying to-day to draw the view I showed you that morning with the piny ridge

[1] His *Life of Carlyle*.

between us and the Mont Blanc. But I couldn't draw the ridge, and there was no Mont Blanc, any more than there was any you; for indeed the Mont Blanc *we* knew is no more. All the snows are wasted, the lower rocks bare, the luxuriance of light, the plentitude of power, the Eternity of Being, are all gone from it — even the purity — for the wasted and thawing snow is grey in comparison to the fresh-frosted wreaths of new-fallen cloud which we saw in that morning light — how many mornings ago? The sadness of it and wonder are quite unparalleled, as its glory was. But no one is sad for it, but only I, and you, I suppose, would be. L. would be perfectly happy, doubtless, because Mont Blanc is now *Sans-culotte* literally, and a naturalized, Republican, French Mount besides, — without any Louis Napoleon to make the dying snows blush for their master.

And as the Glaciers, so the sun that we knew is gone! The days of this year have passed in one drift of soot-cloud, mixed with

blighting air. I was a week at Avallon in August, without being able to draw *one* spiral of its porch-mouldings, and could not stand for five minutes under the walls of Vézelay, so bleak the wind. The flowers are not all dead yet, however — the euphrasy and thyme are even luxuriant, and the autumn crocus as beautiful as of old. I can't get up, *now*, alas, to my favorite field of gentian under the Aiguille de Varens, but I find the fringed autumn gentian still within reach on the pastures of the Dôle. The Rhone still runs, too, though I think they will soon brick it over at Geneva, and have an "esplanade" instead. They will then have a true Cloaca Maxima, worthy of modern progress in the Fimetic Arts.

I go back to Geneva on Wednesday, and then to Pisa and Lucca — a line to Lucca would find me in any early day of October, and should be read beside Ilaria, and perhaps with her gift of Cheerfulness.

Ever your loving

J. R.

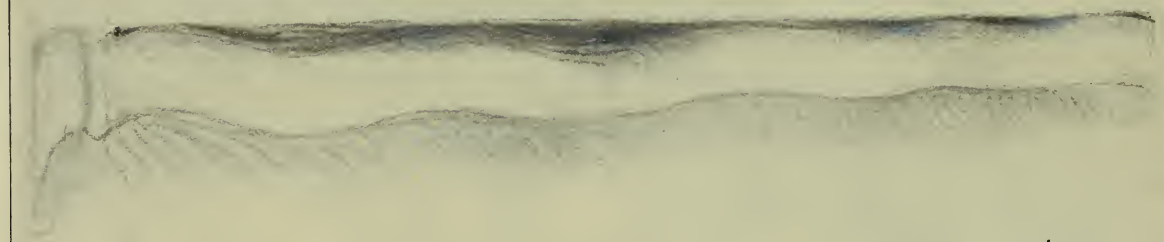
Don't think this is a brain-sick statement — I certify you of the facts as scientifically true.

LUCCA, Coffee time (7 A. M.)
3 *October*, 1882.

. . . Well, about these Pisa measurings. You might as well try to measure the sea-waves, and find out their principle. The beginning of the business would be to get at any historical clue to the facts of yielding foundation. The Parthenon is quite a different case from any mediæval building whatsoever. In all great mediæval buildings you have foundation unequal to the weight, you have more or less bad materials, and you have a lot of stolen ones. You might as well go and ask a Timbuctoo nigger why he wears a colonel's breeches wrong side upwards, as a Pisan architect why he built his walls with the bottom at the top and the sides squinting. He likes to show his thefts to begin with — if the ground gives way under him, he stands

on the other leg. I 've long believed myself that finding the duomo would n't stand upright anyhow, they deliberately made a ship of it, with the leaning tower for a sail; and my good helper, Mr. Collingwood, who has been doing the loveliest sections of the Savoy Alps, who are exactly like Pisan architects in *their* "principles," or unprinciples, too — said that he could n't look at the north side without being seasick.

But all this entanglement is of no importance as to the main question of "Liberty" of line, which even I have always taught to be the life of the workman, and which exists everywhere in good work to an extent till now unconceived, even by me — till I had seen the horror of the restoration which put it "to rights." Nearly all our early English Gothic is free hand in the curves, and there is no possibility of drawing even the apparent circles with compasses. Here, and I think in nearly all work with Greek roots in it, there is a spiral passion which drifts every-



Twisted pillars of Aracellen for you to find out the principle of.
Write to Sallaneche - It is safe to the end of October I ain't stop in the horror of Italy more than another ten days or so.

thing like the temple of the winds; this is the first of all subtle charms in the real work — the first of all that is *αἰβοῖ*'d out of it by the restorer. Do you recollect (my "of one mind" with my friend) the quarrel we had about the patchwork of the Spina Chapel? I think you will recollect the little twisted trefoil there. Of course in the restoration they 've put it square. And it is n't of the slightest use to point any of these things out to the present race of mankind. It is finally tramwayed, shamwayed, and eternally damnwayed, and I wish the heavens and the fates joy over it; but they can't expect any help from me, whatever they mean to make of it.

All the same, it seems to me a great shame that I 'm old, and can't see it come to grief; nor even the snows come back to the Alps again, if they do. Again, all the same, I 'll run back to Pisa just now after I 've been at Florence, and get at some measures for you, if I find them takeable on the Baptistery. I *did* the Florentine Baptistery in 1872, and

found there was n't a single space in all the octagon and all the panelling, that matched another. It is exactly like measuring a quartz crystal, except that even the angles are n't fixed! but I did n't measure any of *them*, practically they are true enough in the main octagon. I think the most important thing for your purposes would be to get the entasis of the great campaniles and war-towers. The Guinigi here, and the Verona campanile, and St. Mark's are all extremely beautiful. I'll see what I can make of the Guinigi to-day, and send you some bits of masonry worth notice for the wanton intricacy of piecing. . . .

Write to Sallenche. It is safe to the end of October. I can't stop in the horror of Italy more than another ten days or so.

LUCCA, 9, Morning, 16th *October*, 1882.

I 've just got your letter of the 1st, and have only been out for a little walk in the dew, and to see the Carrara mountains, and come back, round the Chapel of the Madonna

of the Rose, to answer it. I 'm so glad you got that of mine from Sallenches, and I hope my answer to the Pisa one is with you ere this. I 've done some curious work for you since on the walls of Fesole, finding out also much for myself on them, and underneath them. But it 's the Niagara bit I want to answer to-day.

There seems to me no question but that this generation is meant to destroy of the good works of men and of God, pretty nearly all they can get at. But — what *next?* The temporary help to Niagara, or poor little fragments saved at Pisa or Canterbury are virtually nothing, unless as a leaven, and spark in ashes, for future bread and fire. What *now?* — is the question for all of us. Here in Lucca, I was drawing last night a literal bouquet of red Campaniles. Five in a cluster, led by the Guinigi — up against amber and blue sunset. But, they must all soon come down; the wonder is they 've stood so long. And what is to be built in-

stead? — chimneys? or minarets of muezzin to the Religion of Humanity? or shot towers?

Underneath them, Mr. Collingwood, surveying Lucca for me, has shaded already fourteen churches with 12th century (or earlier) fronts. When these are gone, what is to vary the street effects? The Italians think *Magazzini*, but what think Americans, the better sort? . . .

What do you propose to make of the new blank world which Nature herself seems resolved to sweep clean for you, down to her own snows, and carry off the last ruins of Italy with the melting of them, all the four bridges of Verona gone in one day's swirl of Adige.

My own conviction has been these twenty years that when the wicked had destroyed all the work of good people, the good people would get up and destroy theirs; but, though I could bombard Birmingham, and choke the St. Gothard tunnel, and roll Niagara over

every hotel and steamer in the States, to-morrow, I still don't see my way to anything farther! and can't lay out my *Nuova Vita* on the new lines!

I expect a London architect to join me here, and I'll take him to Pisa and get *his* notions of things, and measures. The Fesole findings shall soon come to you. . . .

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

PISA, 5th *November*, 1882.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — I have been longer than I meant in getting back here; but what I promised will be all the better done, for now, I have brought with me Signor Boni,[1] the master of the works on the Ducal palace of Venice. He is a Venetian of the old race, and a man of the purest temper and feeling. He has the Government authority to examine any public building he wishes, so that he can put ladders and scaffolding where

[1] The eminent and admirable architect and archæologist.

he likes here; and he 's getting the Cathedral levels and measures to a centimetre. But he, and I, and my secretary, who is a good draughtsman, are all agreed on the main point, that there is no endeavour to obtain deceptive perspectives anywhere — but only to get continual variety of line, and an almost exulting delight in conquering difficulties or introducing anomalies, which is rather provoked to frolic than subdued by any interference of accident. It seems probable that the five western arches of the nave were added after the rest with less careful foundation, and that they sank away from the rest — so.[1] When the subsidence stopped, they took the cornice off all, rebuilt the arch *a*, of junction, and threw the cornice up, to balance the fall by opposition. This, of course, is a violent exaggeration — but the actual interval at *b* is about three feet. The most curious point of all being that they have used a thicker moulding for three arches at the

[1] See facsimile.

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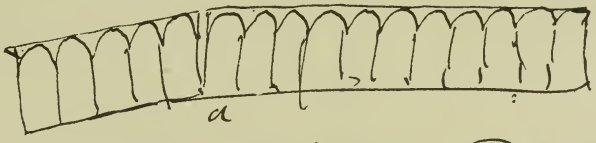
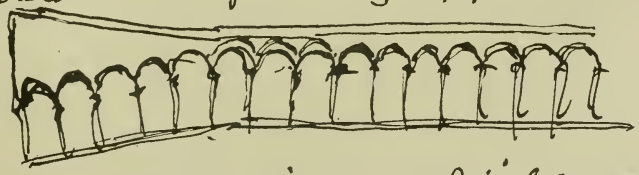


when the subsidence stopped, they took the corner off all, rebuilt the arch a, of junction, and threw the corner up, to balance the fall by opposition



This ~~of~~ corner is a violent exaggeration - but the actual interval at b is about three feet. The most

curious point of all being that they have used
a thicker moulding for their arches at the junction
so that they only touch the corner. Then the shafts
of upper court are diminished down, ~~each~~ wood - the
whole way - sloping a little in harmony with
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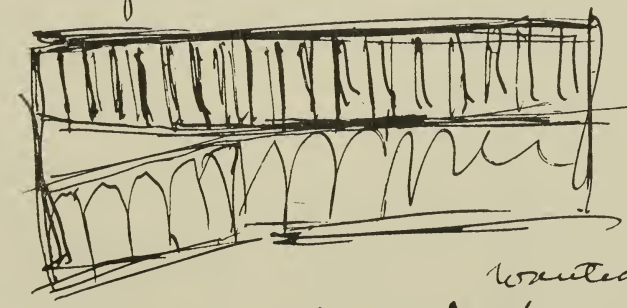
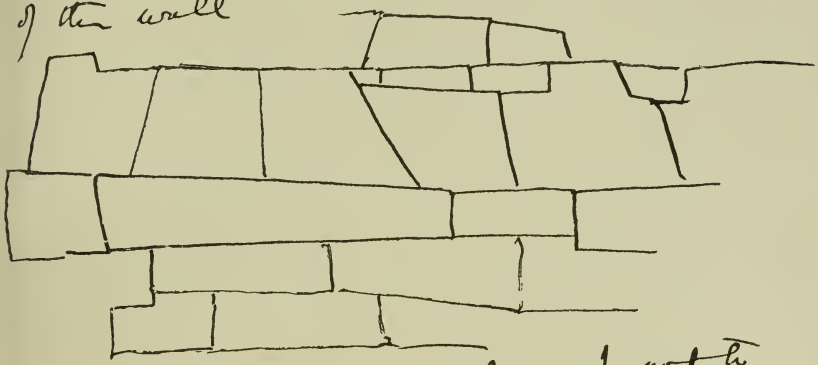


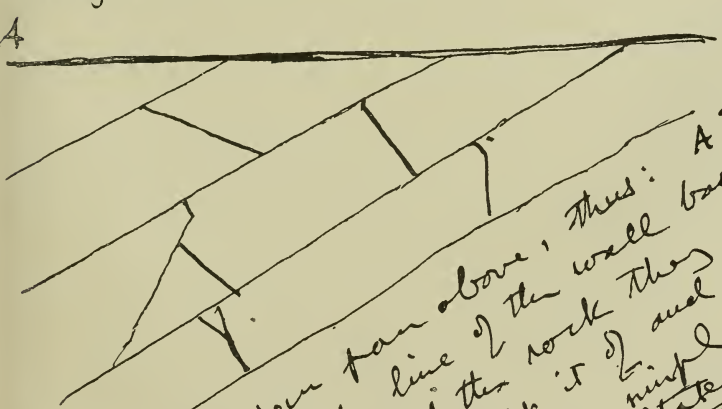
writing so - but for
been down a bad
rather hard day
this week, and am
tired - and I just
wanted to tell you we were
at work for you.

Then discovery I spoke to you of at Petrie

was made possible for me by the recent excavation of part of the wall to the foundation on the native rock. You know the superb fitting of the cut joints of the wall



&c &c. Well - when I got to the rock surface - I found the horizontal surface cleavage of its beds



seen from above; thus: A B
is the line of the wall base.
and the rock thus
built it & and on
was misled
imitated
by them.

junction, so that they only touch the cornice. Then shafts of upper court are diminished down, westward, the whole way, sloping a little in harmony with the fallen arches. I beg your pardon for scrawling so, but I 've been doing a lot of rather hard drawing this week, and am tired, only I just wanted to tell you we were at work for you.

The discovery I spoke to you of at Fesole was made possible to me by the recent excavation of part of the wall to the foundation on the native rock. You know the superb fitting of the varied joints of the wall, etc., etc. — Well, when I got to the rock surface, I found the surface cleavage of its beds A—B seen from above thus:[1] AB is the line of the wall base, and the rock they built it of and on, was simply imitated by them.

I 've kept quite well all the while I 've been in Italy, but have just caught a little cold which makes me languid and scrawly. There 's nothing but sneezing likely to come of it, and

[1] See facsimile.

this Guy Fawkes day is as warm and sweet here as it is always wretched in London. So I hope to write a better report soon.

Address now to Herne Hill. I 'm afraid S.'s photograph is at Annecy, and I shall not get it till next week at soonest. I must content myself meanwhile with the pretty Pisans. Ever your lovingest

J. R.

HERNE HILL, 1st *January*, 1883.

DARLING CHARLES, — What a venomous old infidel you are! I think I never read a nastier comment on a lovely theory than that "other walls are like Fesole that are not on the like rocks." I don't believe there are any other walls like Fesole. You could n't build them but of *macigno*, and I don't know any *macigno* anywhere else. Yes. I got drawings — fairly careful, of wall and rock — both.

Those Pisan details are quite delightful, but I think Boni's report will be exhaustive — he has got his measures to a centimeter,

and has such a knowledge of cements and joints that nothing escapes him. I send you a present of one of his little drawings of ornament, which will show you the infinite fineness of the creature.

I 'm very well, and doing crystallography and geology; I think my good assistant Collingwood will get the glacier theory well swept out of the way at last. . . .

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

OXFORD, 10th *March*, 1883.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — Emerson and Carlyle came to me about a week since, and I am nearly through them, grateful heartily for the book, and the masterful index; but much disappointed at having no word of epitaph from yourself on both the men.

The Emerson letters are infinitely sweet and wise; here and there, as in p. 30, vol. ii., unintelligible to me. C 's, like all the words of him published since his death, have vexed

me, and partly angered, with their perpetual "me miserum" — never seeming to feel the extreme ill manners of this perpetual whine; and, to what one dares not call an affected, but a quite unconsciously false extent, hiding the more or less of pleasure which a strong man must have in using his strength, be it but in heaving aside dustheaps.

What in my own personal way I chiefly regret and wonder at in him is, the perception in all nature of nothing between the stars and his stomach, — his going, for instance, into North Wales for two months, and noting absolutely no Cambrian thing or event, but only increase of Carlylian bile.

Not that I am with you in thinking Froude wrong about the "Reminiscences." They are to me full of his strong insight, and in their distress, far more pathetic than these howlings of his earlier life about Cromwell and others of his quite best works; but I am vexed for want of a proper Epilogue of your own.

I came here from Brantwood through driv-

ing snow — sprinkling, but vicious in the whiffs — on Thursday, and found people glad to see me, and elbowing each other to hear, so that I had to give the one lecture I had really for them, twice over. It will be in print next week, and quickly sent you. . . .

How much better right than C. have I to say, "Ay de mi?"

I am going to leave to-morrow, but return after Easter to set things further ahead here: a new edition of second volume of "Modern Painters," not without comment and epilogue, will be out by that time, and I hope to amuse you. There are no threatening symptoms, yet, as in former springs, of any returning illness, but I am well taught the need of caution. . . .

Ever your grateful and loving

J. RUSKIN.

HERNE HILL, 15th *March*, 1883.

Here's your note of fearing question — just come. I hope mine about your Emerson

book is by this time at sea; but it 's a delight to me to follow it with further assurance of my hitherto safety this year. As far as I can judge, there is no threatening, for I sleep quite soundly, and long enough, and people say I am looking well. But it is curious that I really look back to all those illnesses, except some parts of the first, with a kind of regret to have come back to the world. Life and Death were so wonderful, mingled together like that — the hope and fear, the scenic majesty of delusion so awful — sometimes so beautiful. In this little room, where the quite prosy sunshine is resting quietly on my prosy table — last year, at this very time, I saw the stars rushing at each other — and thought the lamps of London were gliding through the night into a World Collision. I took my pretty Devonshire farm-girl Nurse for a Black Vision of Judgment; when I found I was still alive, a tinkly Italian organ became to me the music of the Spheres. Nothing was more notable to me through the ill-

ness than the general exaltation of the nerves of sight and hearing, and their power of making colour and sound harmonious as well as intense — with alternation of faintness and horror of course. But I learned so much about the nature of Phantasy and Phantasm — it would have been totally inconceivable to me without seeing, how the unreal and real could be mixed.

I 'm not going to stay in London, but go down to my lake again till after Easter, when I 'm going to give a lecture on Burne-Jones, exclusively; and then one on Leighton and Watts. Leighton has won my heart by painting some extremely pretty girls, whom I can't but with much deprecation of myself extremely prefer to the old hard outlined Mantegnas and Leonardos and the like.

Love to S. accordingly, and I am

Ever your penitent

AUTHOR OF "MODERN PAINTERS."

I found I was really rather bored by Lippi and the rest of them, this time !!!

BRANTWOOD, 16th April, 1883.

DARLING CHARLES,—I 've been out on the lake in as strong wind as I could hold the boat against — with Miss Kate Greenaway sitting at the stern of my little "Jumping Jenny," and my hand shakes a little now, but I must answer your kind letter the day I get it, chiefly to thank you for the strong and precious words about Carlyle. My *one* question about a man is, whether his work be right or not. Pope's lies, or Byron's, in the Walty affair and the like, or Carlyle's egoisms, or my own follies, or Turner's, I recognize as disease or decay, or madness, and take no interest in the nosology; but I never excuse them, or think them merely stomachic, but spiritual disease. . . .

I should like to see Volterra; but unless it is of *macigno* it can't be like Fesole, any more than Perugia can be like Mycenæ. Pisa is really done by Signor Boni; but I am so terribly afraid of my brains going again (I like your saying I 'm not cautious!)

that I can't see to its carrying out at present. I've a book on the Alps by Mr. Collingwood going on, and another of which I hope to send you a copy swiftly by an American girl. The "Modern Painters" shall be found directly.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

OXFORD, 19th *June*, '83.

DARLING CHARLES, — I've just finished my spring work (and note paper) here, and have only to say how thankful I am that you're coming, and that I am well enough to make you happier by coming — or going — anywhere with you; but the first thing must be that you come straight to Brantwood and stay there enough to see what's there, and then I'll come with you as far as here, anyhow. I'm not my own master quite, this year, but we'll see, and think. I'll write again from Brantwood if I get there safe — I always think of railway as of sea — and

write this at any rate to be sure of meeting you when you land. Ever your loving

JOHN RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, 24th *June*, 1883.

DARLING CHARLES, — . . . I expect you to-morrow — or Tuesday — or — Wednesday at latest, and I don't think you 'll want to start directly, even for Switzerland. I can't, at all events before the end of July, if then ; but I have to go back to Oxford first, and doubtless you will have to be in London a little while.

I expect a nice girl here to-day . . . who will probably stay for a week, — Flora Shaw, a soldier's daughter, and a really clever and right-minded story-writer, who will be very happy with us, and you not less at ease, I hope, than if she were n't here.

Ever your lovingest J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 28th *July*, 1883.

. . . What a shame that I 've never said a word since you left ; but somehow I can't

believe in the existence nor mediatorship of Messrs. Baring.

To-day I have your note from blessed Domo d' Ossola — and I would I were there. But I 've got entangled in ground veronica and *Anagallis tenella* — and am sick to finish some work in weeds half done years ago; and the ideas of it festering in my head ever since; and worse, I 've letters from the Keeper of National Gallery, and Librarian of British Museum — and the British Museum is being broken up, and the National Gallery wants its plates and drawings; and the British Museum writes to me to defend it — and I 've written back that I 'm going to advise sending the Manuscripts to the Bodleian, and putting the sculpture in the National Gallery cellars; but I must go up to London to get well into the row; and I don't see my way out of it, and believe it will be very utterly impossible for me to get abroad this year — even as far as Chartres — but it is possible you might like to look at Wells and

Glastonbury with me, rather than come to autumnal Brantwood. I 'll write more to-morrow of what I 'm doing. . . .

All our loves, and all manner of every other pleasant feeling mixed in mine.

Your ever faithful and — obedient

J. RUSKIN.

BRANTWOOD, Sunday, 29th *July*, '83.

DARLING CHARLES, — Instead of telling you more of what I am about, I want to press on you to use your time at Milan in getting rid of your respect for Leonardo. He was meant for a botanist and engineer, not a painter at all; his caricatures are both foolish and filthy, — filthy from mere ugliness; and he was more or less mad in pursuing minutiæ all his days. Study the St. Stephen in the Monasterio Maggiore, and what you can find of Luini in the Brera, alternately with the smirking profiles in the Ambrosian library; but above all, the pure pale Christ in left hand chapel in St. Am-

brogio — also the grand Maries opposite — by his companion fresco painter. You will find there is really never a bit of colour of the smallest interest in Leonardo, nor a thought worth thinking, and his light and shade is always, one side light against dark, the other dark against light — and he's done for! When did you ever see either a profile or full face by Leonardo in middle tint against light behind?

Don't waste time in going to Saronno. Look and think in the Brera, and then go back to the hills.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 2nd *August.*

DARLING CHARLES, — I've got a quiet time now — Joanie away at a wedding; and I've given up a journey to London, which the summer's too short for, and have been reading some bits of old diary, in which the ink is getting pale.

I should like you to have the burning of these things, when I've done with them. I don't see much what else is to be done; but it may be in your heart perhaps to give a day or two here to talk over the matter, only I don't want you to shorten your Italian time. . . .

I hope to-day to do a quiet bit of leaf-drawing — once more, — a little rod of *Veronica officinalis*.

I hope you're being very good and finding out the folly in Leonardo, and that you haven't so much plague cloud as we have here. But we had *one* quite clear, beatific day last week.

I read about the Ischian convulsion yesterday. What *do* the Gods mean? How solemnly we in England and you in America should cherish the life on safe rock and under clement sky.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 25th *February*, 1884.

. . . I can't write, because I 've always so much to say. How can I tell you anything of the sea of troubles that overwhelm old age — the trouble of troubles being that one can't take trouble enough.

At this moment I 'm arranging a case at the British Museum, to show the whole history of silica, and I 'm lending them a perfect octahedral crystal of diamond weighing 129 carats, which I mean to call St. George's diamond, and to head my history of precious stones. And I 'm giving them dreadful elementary exercises at Oxford which they mew and howl over, and are forced to do, nevertheless; and I 'm writing the life of Sta. Zita of Lucca; and an essay, in form of lecture, on clouds, which has pulled me into a lot of work on diffraction and fluorescence; and I 've given Ernest Chesneau [1] a commission to write a life of Turner from a French point

[1] Author of a book on the *École Anglaise*, of which the translation was edited by Ruskin.

of view — under my chastisement "if too French;" and I've just got the preface written for Collingwood's "Alps of Savoy," supplement to "Deucalion;" and I'm teaching Kate Greenaway the principles of Carpaccio, and Kate's drawing beautiful young ladies for me in clusters, — to get off Carpaccio if she can.

And I've given Boehm a commission for 12 flat medallions, Florentine manner, life size, of six British men and six British women, of typical character in beauty; all to be looking straight forward in pure profile, and to have their hair treated with the Greek furrow.

And I'm beginning to reform the drama, by help of Miss Anderson; and I had "The Tempest" played to me last week by four little beauties — George Richmond's grandchildren — of whom the youngest (11) played Ferdinand and Caliban, both, and was a quite perfect lover; and the eldest played the boatswain and Miranda. And I've given three

sets of bells (octaves) to Coniston school, and am making the children learn chimes.

And I 'm doing a "Fors" now and then in a byeway; Allen will have a nice parcel to send soon. And I 'm here at Herne Hill — and I 'm just going down to breakfast, . . . and I can't write any more. I 'm pretty well, I believe — but watching for breakdown. . . . I 'm ever

Your poor old

J. R.

I am so glad you can remember with happiness. *I* live wholly to-day, and sadly enough, except in work (or wicked flirting). But, though I say it, nice girls do make quite as much fuss about me as I do about them, and they plague my life out to sign their birthday books.

BRANTWOOD, 1st *June*, 1884.

DEAREST CHARLES,—A thousand welcomes, and please come here as soon as you possibly can. I have more reasons for asking you to

do so than my impatience to see you, but I think that great one is enough — though the rest are not little ones. Joan's love and welcome, with all her heart and mind — and Turner's, and my father's and mother's; and I'm ever Your loving and grateful

JOHN RUSKIN.

EUSTON HOTEL [LONDON], 7th *Oct.*, '84.

It has been a great mortification and disappointment to me not to see S. again; but the world's made up of morts and disses, and it's no use always saying "Ay de mi!" like Carlyle. I'm really ashamed of him in those letters to Emerson. My own diaries are indeed full of mewing and moaning, all to myself, but I think my letters to friends have more a tendency to crowing, or, at least, on the whole, try to be pleasant.

I've great gladness in your note about S. W. Wind. I shall have you sending me nice sympathetic data about your glaciers, soon. . . .

I am just going down to Canterbury — to Oxford next week, to begin lectures on the pleasures of England.

1. Bertha to Osburga,	Pleasure of	Learning.
2. Alfred to Confessor,	"	" Faith.
3. Confessor to Cœur de L.,	"	" Deed.
4. Cœur de L. to Eliz.,	"	" Fancy.
5. Protestantism,	"	" Truth.
6. Atheism,	"	" Sense.
7. Mechanism,	"	" Nonsense.

I 'm pretty well forward with them, — but they 're not up to my best work.

Ever your loving J. R.

CANTERBURY, 9th *October*, 1884.

DEAREST CHARLES, — . . . . I caught cold, slightly, as soon as I left Brantwood on Wednesday last, and am nursing myself, with the help of two dear old ladies in the precincts of Canterbury. For the first time yesterday I saw St. Martin's Church, and the view it commands of the county gaol. I re-

treat to-day to my bedside, whence I have a lovely view of Becket's crown, and the Central Tower — the domestic looking little apse between them is now rich in sunlight, — but Lucca and Pisa have spoiled me.

I am getting such lovely work done in Switzerland and Savoy by the writer of enclosed card, which I send that you may envy us both, and come back as soon as you can to see the "subject by the river."

These drawings he (Mr. Rooke [1]) is drawing for me are the first I ever had done as I wanted, and as I should have done them myself, if only I had never written "Modern Painters."

The first number of its reprint — which is to be in three parts: In Montibus Sanctis, Coeli Enarrant, and Laetitia Silvae (or some such name) — is passed for press. . . .

Your lovingest
J. R.

[1] Mr. T. M. Rooke, whose drawings, admirable in skill and fidelity and full of appreciation of the poetic elements of his subjects, deserve all the praise which Ruskin gives them.

BRANTWOOD, 2nd *January*, 1885.

. . . I am not so well as you hoped, having overstrained myself under strong impulse at Oxford, and fallen back now into a ditch of despond, deepened by loss of appetite and cold feet, and dark weather,—Joan in London and people all about more or less depending on me; no S. or M. for me to depend on — no Charles — no Carlyle. Even my Turners for the time speechless to me, my crystals lustreless. After some more misery and desolation of this nature I hope, however, to revive slowly, and will really not trust myself in that feeling of power any more. But it seems to me as if old age were threatening to be a weary time for me. I 'll never mew about it like Carlyle, nor make Joanie miserable if I know it — but it looks to me very like as if I should take to my bed and make everybody wait on me. This is only to send you love — better news I hope soon.

Ever your

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 1st *October*, '85.

DEAREST CHARLES, — I am certainly better, and at present steadily gaining, bearing the burden of idle hours in the thankfulness that I am myself no longer a burden to poor Joanie. But she insists on the idleness, and will not let me write — but only dictate, and truly it will be better for you to have in her hand the rest of this note.

In the looking over the neglects of past life! I found a lovely letter of yours of 1882, about the Cathedral of Pisa, giving evidence of the façade being meant to incline forward. Neglected alike in that year, the result of Signor Boni's examination, which I suppose he has written out — of course it is lost; but I 'm going to ask him this question about the façade. The letter goes on very sadly about the "victory of materialism," and the distant hope of a revival in a thousand years, of all that you and I have cared for — only the Alps to be let go in the meantime!

I believe the despondency caused by their own natural, as it seems, sympathy, with the scorn of their beauty, by the perishing of their snows, has borne a great part in the steady depression which has laid me open to these great illnesses. If only the Mont Blanc that you and I saw from St. Martin's that morning was still there, I would set out on a slow pedestrian tour, and expect you to meet me there! As it is, I can't find *anything* to amuse me, or to bring to any good in my old geological work; but I don't believe in any "victory of materialism." The last two years have shown me more spirituality in the world than all my former life.

Enough for to-day.

Ever your lovingest

J. Ruskin.

Brantwood, 20th *October*, '85.

Dearest Charles,— I am so very glad you have got those letters to edit. Carlyle is entirely himself when he stops talking of him-

self; but I totally disagree with you about the wife letters being sacred. . . .

I can't give you my letters, because I must use them in autobiography. I use very few of anybody's — the purpose of the book being simply to say how I got my knowledge of art and principles of — Economy! There may be a post mortem examination of my loves and friendships.

I have got back some interest in things I used to care for, and am looking a little into things I did n't. Do you happen — or does anybody at Harvard, know where there 's a human book (not a scientific one) on crabs, and shrimps? The Dragon 's out, or I should never have got all this written.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, Easter Wednesday, '86.

DEAREST CHARLES, — I am entirely forbidden to write letters, and I 've written seven difficult ones this morning — and this eighth

has been on my mind this month. I thought you might be wondering what I meant to make of "Præterita," if I live to finish it—and that you ought to know. There are to be 36 numbers — for sixty years. You and Joan may give account of me afterwards. I 've got it all planned out now; and it will be pretty and readable enough I think, all through. . . .

I am retouching and mounting drawings also, and liking my own better; and when you come to see Brantwood again, whether I 'm in it or not, you will find it in a little better order. . . .

BRANTWOOD, 16th *May*.

MY VERY DEAR CHARLES, — Thank you, very heartily, for returning me the two drawings — but you wholly misunderstand my motive in asking their return.

It is not for myself, but for my scholars and lovers that I ask them. There is no drawing of a stone by my hand so good as

your boulder — few of the church I love best so good as that arch of St. Mark's.[1]

America, as long as she worships Mr. Chase, and pirates the teaching of the living, and taxes the teaching of the dead, can get no good of work or word of mine, and no friend of mine should disgrace my work by keeping it there.

. . . I hope this year to retain my power of managing my own servants, and walking in my own woods. You shall hear from me, if I do so. If I am shut up again, you may at all events be thankful I can't say naughty things about America.

Ever your faithful friend,

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 24th *June*, '86.

DARLING CHARLES, — I saw your nice note to Joan the other day, and vowed I must write at once.

Two — three days have passed, irksome or

[1] Both in my possession now.

more or less pro-vocantive things keeping me otherwise busy. To-day I have had pen in hand since the morning — now three afternoon — windy nothingness instead of lake — no going out. I was going to lie down on the sofa to try to sleep, when I saw your third vol. M. P. with all those lovely annotations laid out for conference with my own final opinions! So I began peeping and muttering — and now I 've just come on the passage I think worth all the rest of the book, marked "Omit to end of chapter."

I was getting a little dull, myself, over the Campo Santo of Pisa (chap. vi. vol. ii. "Præterita"), and feared the reader would say the book had better stop now. But in chap. x. (Vevay) I propose to give an account of a steamboat passage thence to Geneva, and some farther passages of the year 1856 — and I think the "Omit to end of chapter" will be the loveliest finish for it. I think I shall begin to-morrow morning, D. V.

Not but there's some sense in some of the

annotations, but on the whole, I consider the book has the best of it, and the only observations I feel inclined now to attend to are such as " The analysis of this temper needs to be carried farther "! etc.

Quite seriously, I am very thankful to find the book has so much good in it, and am a good deal cheered after being for the last month or two weeks sick hearted enough in thinking of what I might have done instead.

The weather has been worse than depressing. Night without stars — day without evening or morning — and all the garden blighted for the year. My chief comfort has been in reading Carlyle's descriptions of people. I 've got Froude's leave to take them all out and edit them myself — if only — only — I get a little strong next year. My chief discomfort is . . . and my beard's getting thin and stiff, and general dilapidation of the stones yet left on one another — in Venice or me. . . . I was glad to see Moore again, and hope to be somewhat helpful to him.

When shall I see you? You really ought to look at our lovely England again — as a Manufacturing town. Oliver Wendell seems delighted — and says he has seen hawthorn. *I* have n't this spring. Ever your lovingest

ST. C.

BRANTWOOD, 18th *August*, '86.

MY DEAREST CHARLES, — You ought not to be so anxious during these monsoons and cyclones of my poor old plagued brains. They clear off, and leave me, to say the least, as wise as I was before. Certainly this last fit has been much nastier for me than any yet, and has left me more frightened, but not so much hurt, as the last one. . . . Send me a line now and then still, please, — whether I 'm mad or not I 'm

Your loving J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 28th *Aug.*, '86.

DARLING CHARLES, — Your note to Joan of the 13th is extraordinarily pious, for *you!*

and not a bit true! It is not the Lord's hand, but my own folly, that brings these illnesses on me; and as long as they go off again, you need n't be so mighty grave about them. How many wiser folk than I go mad for good and all, or bad and all, like poor Turner at the last, Blake always, Scott in his pride, Irving in his faith, and Carlyle, because of the poultry next door. You had better, by the way, have gone crazy for a month yourself than written that niggling and naggling article on Froude's misprints.[1]

I learn a lot in these fits of the way one sees, hears, and fancies things, in morbid conditions of nerve. . . . I suffer no pain whatsoever, and am not the least frightened for myself. . . . Part of this last vision, in which a real thunderstorm came to play its own part, was terrific and sublime more than anybody can see, sane (unless perchance they are to

[1] For some years past Ruskin had been on terms of cordial friendliness with Froude, and much influenced by him, especially in his view of Froude's dealings with the trust committed to him by Carlyle.

be swallowed up by Etna or swept away by a cyclone).

Did I tell you that during this illness I was able to read Sydney Smith's "Moral Philosophy," and with what sense I have got back, declare it now to be the only moral philosophy. It entirely supersedes the wisdom of "Modern Painters."

Ever your loving

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 13th *September*, '86.

DARLING CHARLES, — I like the notion of leaving you out of my Autobiography. What would be the use of it, if it did not show under what friendly discouragements I wrote my best works? You might as well propose I should leave out Carlyle, or Joan herself!

I have been steadily gaining since last report, and on Friday was half way up the Old Man,[1] without more fatigue than deepened the night's rest, and greatly pleased that, the day

[1] The mountain called "Coniston Old Man."

being exceptionally clear, I saw Ingleborough without any feeling of diminished faculty of sight.

And the last illness did indeed leave lessons as to the danger of mere active excitement of brain, which none of the four previous ones did. For all those, there was some reason in the particular trains of feeling that ended in them; but this last came of a quite dispassionate review of the opinions of the Committee of Council on Education, and analysis of the legal position of the Vicar of Coniston under the will of Lady le Fleming. It has only struck me lately that I was meant for a lawyer, and that the æsthetic side, or point, of me ought to have remained undeveloped, like the eyes which the Darwinians are discovering in the backs, or behinds, of lizards.

By the way, nothing in late reading has delighted me more, or ever did, in præterite reading, than the letters of aged Humboldt to youthful Agassiz.

. . . I had an interesting encounter with a biggish viper, who challenged me at the top of the harbour steps one day before my last fit of craze came on. I looked him in the eyes, or rather nose, for half a minute, when he drew aside into a tuft of grass, on which I summoned our Tommy — a strong lad of 18, who was mowing just above — to come down with his scythe. The moment he struck at the grass tuft, it — the snake — became a glittering coil more wonderful than I could have conceived, clasping the scythe and avoiding its edge. Not till the fifth or sixth blow could Tommy get a disabling cut at it. I finally knelt down and crushed its head flat with a stone, — and hope it meant the last lock of Medusa's hair for me.

Ever your lovingest

J. R.

BRANTWOOD, 23rd *March*, 1887.

I 'm writing from 15 to 25 letters a day just now, besides getting on with " Præterita,"

"Proserpina," "Ulric" editing and "Christ's Folk" editing, and as you can't be much more busy, and haven't been crazy, I think *you* ought to keep up our acquaintance with an occasional word or two. . . .

The chapter of "Præterita" I'm upon ("Hotel du Mont Blanc") is lagging sadly because I can't describe the Aiguille de Varens as I want to. I do hope I shan't go off my head this summer again and lose the wild roses, — for "Præterita" will be very pretty if I can only get it written as it's in my head while right way on.

It is snowing and freezing bitterly, and I consider it all the fault of America and failure of duty in Gulf Stream, and so on.

. . . Seriously, I believe I am safer than for some years in general health, but have lost sadly in activity and appetite.

Ever your loving J. R.

It was soon after my last stay with him that Ruskin began to write his "Præterita," the

record "of scenes and thoughts," as its title says, "perhaps worthy of memory in my (his) past life." It was issued in monthly numbers, beginning in April, 1885, but its regular publication was at times interrupted by illness, and the last number, the twenty-eighth, appeared in July, 1889. By far its largest autobiographical part is occupied with the account of Ruskin's childhood and youth, ending practically with the year 1856, when he was thirty-seven years old. It was the year of the beginning of our friendship. Although there are many passages which indicate the disturbance of his mind, yet, barring these, the spirit and style of the book are thoroughly delightful, and truly represent the finer characteristics of his nature. He has written nothing better, it seems to me, than some pages of this book, whether of description or reflection. The retrospect is seen through the mellowing atmosphere of age, the harshness of many an outline is softened by distance, and the old man looks back upon his own life with a feeling which permits him to delineate it with perfect candor, with exquisite tenderness, and a playful liveliness quickened by his humor-

ous sense of its dramatic extravagances and individual eccentricities.

After a fresh attack of illness in 1889, Ruskin was never able to take up again the broken thread of his story. The last ten years of his life were spent in retirement, and save for recurrent attacks of brain trouble, his days were peaceful and not unhappy. He still enjoyed the beauties of Nature and of Art, still liked to read or hear read his favorite books, still loved to listen to simple music. He was cared for with entire tenderness and devotion. His sun sank slowly, and amid clouds, but they did not wholly darken its light.

The last words of his own writing which I received from him were written on the 21st of November, 1896, a few months more than forty years from the date of the beginning of our friendship. They were at the foot of a letter of Mrs. Severn, and were written in pencil with a trembling hand, — "From your loving J. R."

"Præterita" ends with the following words, strangely symbolic of much of the life of which they close the record: "Fonte Branda

I last saw with Charles Norton, under the same arches where Dante saw it. We drank of it together, and walked together that evening on the hills above, where the fireflies among the scented thickets shone fitfully in the still undarkened air. *How* they shone! moving like fine-broken starlight through the purple leaves. How they shone! through the sunset that faded into thunderous night as I entered Siena three days before, the white edges of the mountainous clouds still lighted from the west, and the openly golden sky calm behind the Gate of Siena's heart, with its still golden words, 'Cor magis tibi Sena pandit,' and the fireflies everywhere in sky and cloud rising and falling, mixed with the lightning, and more intense than the stars."

INDEX

INDEX

Note. R. stands for John Ruskin.

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